

# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

## **Monterey, California**



## **THESIS**

**UKRAINE AND NATO: THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTILATERAL  
RELATIONS (1989—2001)**

by

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March 2001

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**UKRAINE AND NATO: THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTILATERAL  
RELATIONS (1989—2001)**

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requirements for the degree of

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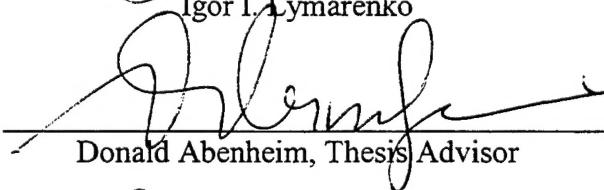
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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines the evolution of the Ukraine-NATO ties since 1991. The rise of new states in the former USSR represents a diplomatic revolution of the first order, which this study analyses in part. The Ukraine is officially committed to a policy of neutrality, and has used its non-bloc status mainly to distance itself from Russia. It has, at the same time tried to develop closer political relationships with the countries of Central and Western Europe. At this moment, it is vital for the Ukraine to establish a special relationship with NATO, as well as bilateral relations with the USA. By means of this policy, the Ukraine may confirm its independence and sovereignty, to build a new state, and to integrate into the Western society. Presently the Ukraine needs to create constructive relations with Russia. Furthermore the relationships between the Ukraine, NATO, and the USA will play a very significant role in Ukraine affirming itself.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union provided many nations, which had been separated from the Western society during the Cold War, the opportunity to develop mutual cooperation with Western economic and political institutions. At the same time, since 1989, these events have absorbed the attention of the world, regarding European security and the future of the newly independent states of Europe.

The Ukraine, as one of the largest states in Europe, located in the geographic center of Europe, and occupying an important strategic position, has a weighty role in the European security system.

After its independence in 1991, the Ukraine made its historic choice to embrace independence, and sovereignty, augmenting a market economy, strengthening democracy, and integrating into the European economic and political space.

Thus, the geopolitical situation and historical heritage of the Ukraine objectively determine the multi-dimensional character of the Ukrainian foreign political orientation.

Therefore, the Ukraine started to implement a policy of neutrality between the West and Russia, setting a priority on relations with Western and Central Europe. The survival of the Ukraine as a free and independent nation, its economic and political sovereignty and security became the major principle of the Ukrainian strategy. A special relation with NATO, which became a politico-military institution and the guardian of democracy and human rights, and bilateral relations with USA, was vital for the Ukraine.

After analyzing the events that took place in the period since the Ukraine's independence to the present, this thesis concludes that relationships with Western countries and NATO helped the Ukraine obtain all its aims. The special relationship with NATO and the bilateral relation with the USA are helping to confirm the Ukrainian independence and its movement to an authentic democratic society, and to confirm its own domestic and external abilities to maintain its security. Now it is clear that democracy will succeed only if the states emerging from the former Soviet Union belong to a European and Western political, economic, and military community.

To consolidate democracy, and to make a more successful transition to Western society, the Ukraine still needs to resolve several challenges: create a more active and stronger political society in the country; increase the acceptance of Western society and NATO among its population by explaining the policies of these Western institutions and justifying the benefits that the Ukraine could obtain from these institutions; develop real economic reforms, principally a market economy capable of generating economic growth; and eliminate both political and civil corruption, perhaps one of the most complex barriers facing the Ukraine's transition.

Only with the help of Western society, its exemplary judicial system and other governmental and political structures can the Ukraine battle these complex problems and create an authentic democratic society.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

On December 17, 1991, the leaders of four of the Soviet Republics—Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, and Kazakhstan—met in the Belovezskaya Forest in Belarus and made an unprecedented announcement: the Soviet Union comprised of 15 Republics no longer existed as a unified entity. It was one of the most important events in the twentieth century. The collapse of the USSR was hailed by the west as a victory for freedom and a triumph of democracy over totalitarianism. With the collapse of the Soviet empire, the dismantling the “iron curtain” and the establishing a market economy gave the newly created states from Eastern Europe an opportunity to embrace the Western political institutions. In addition to these sweeping changes, the breakup of the Soviet Union transformed the entire world political situation, leading to a complete reformulation of political, economic and military alliances all over the globe. The dissolution of the Soviet system had been a painful and complicated process for many nations, but this particularly applied to Ukraine. Aside from Russia, Ukraine was the largest republic in the Soviet Union in terms of population and territory, as well as in overall economic importance.

Ukraine produced about 25 percent of the Soviet GNP and 21 percent of its agricultural output. Strategically, for Russia, the “loss of Ukraine” implied the loss of important strategic territory, an army of hundreds of thousands of troops, as well as the lost of the best tanks and other military equipment, which were, for obvious reasons, stationed mainly in the western regions of the Soviet Union. Apart from these economic and strategic factors, Russia and Ukraine were also closely linked culturally and

ethnically. For example, Russia's historical roots trace back to Kievan Rus, the princely empire that ruled Eastern Europe from the tenth to the thirteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the "divorce" between Ukraine and Russia was a very complicated process, which created dangerous situations and was a major threat for Ukrainian independence.

On the other hand, Ukraine's unwillingness to join the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and its determination to join the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), increased effective economic and political institution, yet also increased Russia's fears that the "near abroad" will become a strategic "front line," isolating Russia. Therefore, Ukraine, officially committed to a policy of neutrality. It has used its non-bloc status mainly to distance itself from Russia, and has at the same time tried to develop closer political and security relationships with the countries of Central and Western Europe.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the developing relationship between Ukraine and NATO, in light of security, sovereignty, and support in developing a democracy in the young state. Naturally, the attention of the international community was drawn to Ukraine because it lies between NATO and Russia.

In 1999, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were allowed to join NATO. Ukraine welcomed this accession, as it would strengthen security and stability in the European Continent. Ukraine, consistently moving closer to Western European

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<sup>1</sup> K. Loken, T. Bukkvoll, *Ukraine: Social Conditions, and History*, Available [on line] [[Http://www.prio.no/html/osce-ukraine.htm](http://www.prio.no/html/osce-ukraine.htm)], December 2000

organizations, took advantage of this opportunity to improve significantly its relationship with the West.

Over this period (1991-2000), Ukraine has greatly shifted its view of NATO and its security policy. Ukraine also has not opposed NATO's expansion, yet it claimed this process should be evolutionary. Ukraine also felt that NATO had to harmonize with such neighboring countries as Russia and Ukraine. From Ukraine's viewpoint, Ukraine would develop her security through the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and Partnership for Peace (PfP) framework. At this point, Ukraine advocated building pan-European security institutions, especially the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the main pillar of the new European security architecture. Ukraine saw that NATO would be a positive factor for this institution.<sup>2</sup>

After the Russian Duma (Parliament) and politicians called into question Ukraine's sovereignty (especially Crimea and Sevastopol statutes in 1993) and after some Russian government officials suggested using economic pressure to boost Ukraine's integration policy within the CIS, Ukraine placed NATO at the center of its security policy.<sup>3</sup>

Ukraine noticed that NATO was changing from a defense organization to a political-military institution, molding itself into a guardian of democracy and human

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<sup>2</sup> Yaroslav Bilinsky, *Endgame in NATO's Enlargement*, "Evolution in the Views of the Ukrainian Government" Westport, Connecticut 1999, p.31-34

<sup>3</sup> Yaroslav Bilinsky, *Endgame in NATO's Enlargement*, "Russian Moves against Ukraine." Westport, Connecticut 1999, p.37-39

rights. This seemed to guarantee that NATO would not harm other states. Furthermore, the earlier idealism regarding the OSCE was replaced by a more realistic approach to NATO. At this moment, it was vital for Ukraine to establish a special relationship with NATO and at the same time a bilateral relation with the USA. In the negotiation process, Ukraine strongly asked NATO for security assurance or "associate status." In the document called the "NATO-Ukraine Charter," NATO gave vague security assurance to Ukraine.<sup>4</sup>

Ukraine is presently developing a specific security policy regarding NATO and Russia. Economic factors play an important role in Ukraine's security policy since its independence. After Russia launched its price liberalization in January 1992, Ukraine chose to abandon the Ruble zone in order to establish its own national economic policy. Yet, Kiev realized that Ukraine could not run its economy without Russia's inexpensive energy and vast market. Therefore, Ukraine switched its orientation to Russia, but claimed that this integration was limited to economics.

Thus, Ukraine was obligated to advance a policy of neutrality and a policy of balance between two opposing directions: the integration to the West by developing a close relationship with NATO as a guarantor of its security, and developing a good neighbor relationship with Russia. This policy has allowed the nation to maintain its independence and sovereignty.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp.39-43

Furthermore, the positive image of Ukraine in the international arena ensues not from its economic or military power but from its neutral diplomacy. That is, its positive imagine has ensued from its "bridge-diplomacy," and denuclearization. Secretary-General of NATO Xavier Solana in 1996 called Ukraine "Europe's Linchpin" and "strategic pivot in Europe."

## B. IMPORTANCE OF THE TOPIC AND METHODOLOGY

This topic is important for several reasons. First of all, since Ukraine's location is a highly strategic geopolitical space in Europe, it is indeed "Europe's lynchpin" and "strategic pivot in Europe."

As a result, Ukrainian independence is a defining feature of the European security architecture. Ukraine and its relations with Russia are determinant in forming Russia's future. Ukraine would assume a role as a bridge between NATO and Russia. Another point that, Ukraine might be a serious candidate for ethnic conflict and separatism, which could provoke serious consequences for European security.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, its special relationship with NATO and its bilateral relation with the USA are helping to confirm Ukrainian independence. Ukraine's transition to a genuine democratic society confirms its own domestic and external abilities to maintain its security. As a result, a politically stable Ukraine at peace with its neighbors is fundamental to peace and stability in Europe.

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<sup>5</sup>Tor Bjerkvoll, *Ukraine and European Security*, "Introduction," The Royal Institute of International Affairs 1997, pp.1-3

Of the various related issues that this thesis explores, the following four stand out as central:

- What are the influences of Ukrainian history on its modern policy?
- What are the origins of Ukrainian policy of neutrality or balance between two superpowers?
- Why are the Ukrainian internal and external policies and its political condition so important for European society?
- Why was nuclear disarmament an extremely important step in confirming Ukraine's independence and democratic consolidation?

**Methodology Employed.** This thesis analyzes official documents of NATO, the USA, Russian and Ukrainian governments. The thesis also relies upon both published and unpublished theoretical papers and documents about NATO, NATO's enlargement, and Ukrainian and Russian policy.

Chapter II details the primary points of Ukrainian history, the collapse of the Soviet empire and Soviet camps, the inception of Ukraine's independence in December 1991, and Ukraine's role in the Post-Soviet space. This Chapter also reviews the historical influences that molded Ukraine's modern policy, as well as its future strategic and evolutionary goals.

Chapter III analyzes the relationship between Ukraine and NATO. An analysis of the chronology of events reveals what conditions and influences shaped this relationship. This Chapter also explores Ukraine's participation in the "Partners for Peace" (PfP)

program and the importance of this program as a mechanism of transformation. Through this partnership, Ukraine and its Armed Forces moved closer to NATO and the West.

Chapter IV examines the difficulties inherent in developing a relationship between the United States and Ukraine, particularly negotiating about nuclear weapons. Moreover, this Chapter highlights the relations between Russia and Ukraine and further highlight the importance for these two nations, which share a common historical heritage and mutual problems, to cooperate and to coexist.

Chapter V summarizes and concludes the research. The thesis concludes that Ukraine is an independent state, developing a new democracy, gradually integrating into Western political, economic and security structures. Ukraine's union with NATO will continue to play a crucial role. For a more successful transformation to the West and for a smooth transition to democracy, Ukraine needs to resolve several complex and challenging issues. First, it must reshape its political society. Secondly, it must increase loyalty among the population to Western policy, especially to NATO and the USA. It must also develop economically by initialing real economical reforms. To achieve such economic goals, it must establish a balanced economic relationship with Russia. Finally, with the help of Western countries, especially the USA, Ukraine must find ways to uproot the corruption that undermines it hopes for consolidating its democracy.

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## **II. INDEPENDENT UKRAINE IN EUROPE**

### **A. END OF THE COLD WAR: BEGINNING OF A NEW EUROPIAN SOCIETY**

#### **1. Key Historical Issues In Ukrainian History**

The end of the Cold War (1989), the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the disappearance of the Warsaw Pact removed the totalitarian pressure from over half of Europe and gave many nations and countries the opportunity for autonomous development. It also gave a chance for cooperating with Western economic, political and security institutions.

Yet, simultaneously, these events created problems in this region of Europe. These problems included economic and social difficulties, ethnic tensions (e.g. Balkan region) and border disputes (e.g. Ukraine and Romania.) All of these issues affected European security, and the security of all the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union. Ukraine, from the first moment of its independence in 1991, faced these problems too. Before analyzing all of the events that transpired and created the problems listed above, one must ask some basic questions. Indeed, to begin, one might even ask, "What is Ukraine? Why was it one of the first republics that sought independence from the Soviet Union, Why was its desire for independence one of the most serious issues for the 'new' Russia?" There are more questions that may seem odd to pose, but, in fact, two questions exist that have been asked so frequently that they are nearly cliches. "Who are these Ukrainians and what do they want?" Even native Ukrainians are frequently exasperated when they try to answer these two questions.

The Ukrainians are an ancient people of at least 47 million worldwide, or 59 million, if all of their descendants are included. Ukraine today has a total population of approximately 51.3 million. Of this number, ethnic Ukrainians comprise approximately 73 percent and Russians 22 percent or 37 and 11 million, respectively.<sup>6</sup>

According to Mykhaylo Hrushevsky—Ukraine's greatest historian and president of the short-lived Central Rada government of the Ukrainian Republic in 1918—the exact origin of the Slavic people is unknown. It can be assumed that the Slavic people existed long before they were mentioned in Roman historical records in the 1st century A.D. Slavic history, and at the same time history of the Ukrainian people, began with the rumble of hooves when the Scythians dominated the steppes of north of the Black Sea from the 7th to the 4th centuries B.C., initiating centuries of outside political and cultural domination. A very strong Slavic tribe, the Wends, developed in the 4th century; their settlements extended from modern central Ukraine up to the Baltic Sea.<sup>7</sup>

The Ukrainians' period of historic glory was in the Middle Ages, when Kiev was the capital of the Kievan Rus. The first people to unify and control this area for a long period were the Scandinavians, known as the Rus. The Rus took Kiev, and by the late 10th century the city was the center of a unified state known as Kievan Rus, which stretched from the Volga west to the Danube and south to the Baltic (the territory of modern Russia, Byelorussia, and Ukraine). Prince Oleg established the Kyivan Rus

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<sup>6</sup> Yaroslav Bilinsky, *Endgame in NATO's Enlargement*, "Ukrainians-Who Are They?" Westport, Connecticut 1999, p.20

<sup>7</sup> Mykhaylo Hrushevsky, "History of Ukraine," Available [on line] [<http://www.ozemail.com.au.history>], January 2001

proper in 879. He conducted military expeditions to the shores of the Caspian Sea and raided Byzantine cities. Prince Igor, who not only continued external raids but also had to fight insubordinate tribes of Ulitchs and Derevlans, followed him, in 912. In 988, the next Kievan Rus prince Volodymyr Grate accepted Christianity from Constantinople, beginning a long period of Byzantine influence over Kievan politics and culture. In this period, the area was one of the most powerful states of medieval Europe, and Kiev was one of the richest and the most developed capitals at that time.<sup>8</sup> The modern Ukraine inherited the National Blazon and the appellation of the national currency from that period.

Unfortunately, in 1240, Kiev fell into a prolonged period of decline because the Tatar-Mongols captured it. By the fourteenth century (1360) the Kievan Rus lost its independent statehood, insofar as it is possible at all to speak of independent states in the Middle Ages, and by 1520 the Ottoman Empire started to control all of coastal Ukraine.

Military devastation and plague had wiped out much of the population of the Ukrainian steppe by the 15th century, when the region became popular with runaway serfs and Orthodox refugees escaping more tightly controlled neighboring domains. These people came to be known as *kazaks* (Cossacks). At this time, Ukrainian Cossacks formed a state—it was the Cossacks Republic—Zaporizka Sich. From this moment, for the Ukrainian people, long numerous struggles for independence started.

Zaporizka Sich was constantly attacked by Polish and Lithuanian armies from the West and North, and by Turks from the South. The Cossacks Republic to preserve its

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<sup>8</sup> Academician Peter Tolochko, *Ethnic History of Ancient Ukraine*, Institute of Archeology of Ukraine 2001, pp.5-34

independence and freedom created, from time to time, temporally alliances with one side or with another. From 1648 to 1654 the Ukrainian Hetman (military and state leader), Bogdan Khmelnytsky, sought the protection of the Moskovite (Russian) Tsar, and in 1654 signed the Pereyaslav Treaty—military union of Ukraine and Russia. After these events, Ukraine fell under the domination of the Russian Empire, which was rapidly gaining strength. After the Russian Tsar, Peter the Great, won the war against the Swedes on the Ukrainian territory (near the city of Poltava), Ukraine became a Russian province. The Western part of Ukraine, then fell under Polish, Austro-Hungarian and Rumanian Domination.<sup>9</sup>

Ukrainian nationalism flourished in the 1840s, prompting Russian authorities to ban the Ukrainian language in schools, journals and books. Following WWI, and the collapse of tsarist authority, Ukraine finally gained its independence, but civil war broke out and the country quickly descended into anarchy, with six armies vying for power and Kiev changing hands five times in one year.

In January 1918 Ukrainians availed themselves of an opportunity and proclaimed the Ukrainian People's Republic, but it existed for only two years. Mykhail Hrushevsky was the first President of the Ukrainian People's Republic. He was a prominent scholar, but unfortunately not a politician. Council of Ukraine participated in the peace negotiations in Brest Litovsk and concluded a separate peace agreement with the Central Powers (Germany and Austro-Hungary, 1918). After prolonged fighting involving

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<sup>9</sup> Mykhaylo Hrushevsky, "History of Ukraine," Available [on line]: [<http://www.ozemail.com.au.history>], January 2001

Russia, Poland and various Ukrainian political and ethnic factions, troops of the Central Powers that support the extremist nationalists led by Pavlo Skoropaski, Poland retained portions of western Ukraine and the Soviets obtained the rest. Ukraine officially became part of the USSR in 1922.<sup>10</sup>

When Stalin took power in 1927, he made a test case out of Ukraine for his ideas about "harmful" nationalism. In 1932-33 he engineered a famine in the USSR that was most severe in Ukraine and killed as many as 7 million Ukrainians. Executions and deportation of intellectuals further depopulated the country. Stalin also went after the country's premier religious symbols, its churches and cathedrals, destroying in Ukraine over 250 buildings. During the purges of 1937-39, millions of other Ukrainians were either executed or sent to Soviet labor camps.<sup>11</sup> WWII brought further devastation and death, with 6 million perishing in the fighting between the Red Army and the German Wehrmarht. It's estimated that during the first half of the 20th century, war, famine and purges cost the lives of over half the male and a quarter of the female population of Ukraine.

In 1990, the Ukrainian People's Movement for Restructuring won local seats across the country. In July of that year, the parliament declared sovereignty. "After the failed Soviet coup in August 1991, the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) was banned, and on December 1, in an independence referendum, 90.3 percent of the population voted

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<sup>10</sup> K. Loken, T. Bukkvoll, *Ukraine: Social Conditions, and History*, Available [on line]: [[Http://www.prio.no/html/osce-ukraine.htm](http://www.prio.no/html/osce-ukraine.htm)], December 2000

<sup>11</sup> See "Case Studies: Persecution/Genocide," *The Human Rights Series*, vol.III, NY: The University of the State of New York, 1986.

for Ukrainian independence, and 61.6 percent voted for the first Ukrainian president Leonid M. Kravchuk.”<sup>12</sup> Independence was the most important event in several centuries of Ukrainian history. Finally, Ukraine regained its sovereignty, which it had lost such a long time ago.

Leonid Kravchuk, former chairman of the Communist Party of Ukraine’s Republic (CPU), was elected as the first president of Ukraine. Unfortunately, factionalism forced the government’s resignation in September of 1992, and disagreements with Russia over Ukraine’s cache of inherited nuclear weapons and the control of the Black Sea fleet (harbored in the Crimean port of Sevastopol) strained relations between the two countries.

Meanwhile, skyrocketing inflation, fuel shortages and plummeting consumer power plagued the country and exacerbated regional and ethnic differences. The reformer Leonid Kuchma beat Kravchuk in the 1994 presidential election. The CPU benefited from the political and economic turmoil, capturing a substantial majority of parliamentary seats in the 1994 elections. In the late 1990s, new tensions arose between Ukraine and Russia over Ukraine’s closer ties with NATO.

In sum, Ukrainian people achieved their age-old wish, but they needed to create everything anew, in order for Ukraine to assume its historical place in Europe as an independent state.

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<sup>12</sup> Yaroslav Bilinsky, *Endgame in NATO’s Enlargement*, “Ukrainians-Who Are They?” Westport, Connecticut 1999, p.20

Historically, Ukraine's location, considered special and attractive, during its long and difficult history, many times lured other tribes, kingdoms, nations, and later countries to occupy it. As a result, Ukraine has often been invaded and attached to the invader's territory. At least during three periods in its history, the Ukrainian people had an opportunity to establish an independent state and to try to keep its people safe by adopting a policy that was similar to its present foreign policy. Several times, Ukraine enjoyed conformable political situations, but it lost its independence again and again. Now the world wondered, "Could the young Ukrainian state survive as an independent and sovereign European country or would it lose its independence again?" This question appeared again in 1991, and for this reason the young state focused its attention on the Western society, hopefully.

## **2. Role of Ukraine in the Post Soviet Space**

To better understand the role of Ukraine in the post-Soviet space, one must describe the role of Ukraine in the USSR (1920-1991). Before the disintegration of the USSR, Ukraine played an important role in the Soviet Union. For example, Ukrainian agriculture served as the main supplier of the Soviet Union's food to the point that it was labeled, "the breadbasket of the Soviet Union." In addition, more than one-third of the Soviet military industrial complex was located on Ukrainian territory, and nearly 20 percent of the Soviet Union's products were manufactured in Ukraine. A considerable part of soviet transit, particularly pipelines and electric power networks to Europe, passed through Ukraine. The Ukrainian industrial and agriculture complex were significant parts of the Soviet economy, but unfortunately, all these economic and agriculture structures

could successfully work only inside of the entire economic system of the country, and not work independently. Because, for example, energy is a crucial sector of the economy, and in this sector Ukraine is highly dependent on supplies from Russia.<sup>13</sup>

After the collapse of the Soviet empire, Ukraine became the second-largest state in Europe, with a population of 52 million. Ukraine has a vast and strategically situated territory, rich natural resources, a powerful industrial and scientific potential, a highly developed transport system and convenient transit routes. Indeed, among the newly independent states, Ukraine occupied a special place and possessed numerous national attributes.

Beyond these attributes, Ukraine's existence enhanced the security of Poland by reducing a traditional dilemma that Poland had always faced, namely threatening powers existing simultaneously on its western and eastern frontiers. Ukrainian's existence also enhanced the security of Romania, which is far safer today than when it bordered the Soviet Union or the Russian Empire. Ukraine also enhances the security of Turkey, which, in fact, has made Turkey much more confident in dealing with its neighbors. Ukraine's geography even closes off, in effect, Russia's significant geopolitical access to the Mediterranean region.<sup>14</sup>

Ukraine's independence definitely alters the politics of the space formerly occupied by the Soviet Union. Without an independent Ukraine, the CIS would just resemble another empire, with a new name. This empire would be dominated by Russia,

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<sup>13</sup> Paul J. D'Anieri, *Economic Interdependence in Ukrainian-Russian Relations*, "The Energy War," 1993-1994, State University of New York Press 1999, pp. 69-74

<sup>14</sup> Z. Brzezinski, *Ukraine's Critical Role in the Post-Soviet Space*, Distributed by Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University 1998. p.4

which still controlled Ukraine. In effect, this would only be an imperial entity clothed in a new guise. Instead, today Ukraine's statehood defines the CIS in a fashion that significantly differs from Russia's conceptualization. Ukraine's approach to the CIS offers the prospect of enhancing the security of the newly independent states of the CIS.<sup>16</sup> With Ukraine's new presence on the European map, Russia can begin to redefine itself and answer the fundamental question: "Will Russia become a normal European state or will it be a multinational empire?"

After its independence, Ukraine was considered an important player in the future of European society. As previously mentioned, Ukraine has been labeled, a "European linchpin." According to T. Bukkovoll, three important factors have given Ukraine this pivotal role: 1) Ukrainian independence is a defining feature of the future European security architecture, 2) Ukraine is a crucial determinant in forming the future Russia, 3) Ukraine is considered a potential candidate for serious ethnic conflict and separatism.<sup>17</sup>

The existence of an independent, non-aligned Ukraine creates a stabilizing geographical distance between Russia, on the one side, and east central and Western Europe on the other. If that distance were to disappear, the consequences for European security politics could be serious. The present NATO policy of not deploying nuclear weapons and foreign combat troops on the territories of the prospective NATO members

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p.5

<sup>17</sup> Tor Bukkovoll, *Ukraine and European Security*, "Introduction," The Royal Institute of International Affairs 1997, p.1

in eastern and central Europe might have to be revised if Ukraine came under Russia's control, and Moscow seized the opportunity to station troops in Ukraine.<sup>18</sup>

Similarly, if NATO accepted Ukraine as a member, Russia might deem this a strategic loss of such major proportions as to warrant military action to halt it. Regarding such a situation, Michael Mandelbaum has said, "It is not an exaggeration to say that NATO expansion will be good or bad depending on its effect on the peaceful coexistence of Ukraine and Russia."<sup>19</sup>

If Russia is unwilling to accept Ukrainian independence and tries to subordinate it, the inevitable conflict will hamper its democratization, because only a totalitarian regime might keep an unwilling Ukraine in a position of subordination. As a result, an aggressive authoritarian Russia dominating Ukraine could become a troublesome negotiating partner for the rest of Europe, and to be sure, even the entire world. Obviously, the negotiation of future security arrangements for Europe, in this situation, could be jeopardized.

Tor Bukkvol's third point involved Ukraine's deep ethnic, cultural, and economic divide. Truly, this is a vast problem. Historically, Ukrainian regions have taken shape under different political circumstances, demographic pressure and religious orientation. The "Great Divide" between ethnic Russian and the "Russified" east, and the Ukrainian-Poland-Hungarian west could threaten the state, if the Ukrainian government ignored this fact. Therefore, in his inaugural address, President Kuchma underscored the potential

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.1

<sup>19</sup> M. Mandelbaum, "Preserving the New Peace: The Case against NATO Expansion," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No.3, 1995, p.11

dangers arising from the ethnic divisions in the country, “We must understand that Ukraine is a multiethnic state. Any attempts to ignore that fact threaten a deep schism and the collapse of the idea of Ukrainian statehood.”<sup>20</sup>

His predecessor, Leonid Kravchuk, justified key foreign economic and security policies, particularly his compromises on the CIS, as a way of avoiding the emergence of “two Ukraine’s.” The need to ensure a balance between different regions and ethnic groups has loomed large on every important political issue in Ukraine from constitutional and legal change to economic and political reform.<sup>21</sup>

In the event of ethnic conflict or separatism in Ukraine, only negative consequences for its own security, as well as for the rest of Europe would ensue. Inasmuch as an ethnic conflict in Ukraine could easily involve Russia in an interstate. In short, owing to the three factors that Solana pointed out, Ukraine with its geopolitical situation and its historical place on the map of Europe will continue to play an important role in Europe. Without question, “A political stable Ukraine at peace with neighbors is fundamental to peace and stability in Europe.”<sup>22</sup>

As a result of the above points, Kiev has always understood the need to cultivate political, moral, and material support for its independence by establishing a relationship with the West, yet simultaneously develop or create normal relations with Russia.

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<sup>20</sup> Leonid Kuchma, Takes Oath of Loyalty to Ukrainian People, Golos Ukrayny, 21 July 1994, p.2

<sup>21</sup> Two Ukraine's Golos Ukrayny, 20 January 1993; Daily Report: Central Eurasia, 22 Sept.1993, pp.26-27

<sup>22</sup> Tor Bukkvoll, *Ukraine and European Security*, Introduction, The Royal Institute of International Affairs 1997, p.3

U.S., Western European, and especially NATO support substantially improves Kiev's chances for overcoming its two major strategic challenges, consolidating a secure and prosperous state, and normalizing its relations with Russia.

## **B. NEUTRALITY AS A KEY POINT OF UKRAINIAN STRATEGY**

### **1. Main Goals of Ukrainian Strategy**

Optimizing the building of the nation while promoting the transformation processes in Ukraine demands a clear vision of the role and the place for Ukraine in the contemporary world. This vision together with a consistent analysis of the dynamics of Ukraine's interaction with the international community could create the basis for a resolute geopolitical strategy for Ukraine's future.<sup>23</sup> Today, the problems of forming and implementing this national strategy, defining its geopolitical priorities and its vital national interests exactly, and making the political élite aware of the Ukrainian role and place in the global geopolitical realm are becoming core imperatives and decisive factors in Ukraine's historical and political future.<sup>24</sup> A clear definition in the public consciousness of basic geopolitical priorities and national interests is one of the most important preconditions for developing an effective external and internal political strategy for the future. Unfortunately, these interests and priorities have not been consolidated in the national Ukrainian consciousness, nor have they even been adequately developed and defined on the state level during the first years of independence. As John F. Kennedy rightly said, "The national interest is more important than ideology." Likewise, as H.

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<sup>23</sup> O. Honcharenko, O. Strelak, *Ukraine 2000 and Beyond: Geopolitical Priorities and Securities of Development*, Ukrainian National Institute for Strategic research 2000, Available: [on line]

[<http://www.niss.gov.ua/book/engl/005.htm>], November 2000

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

Morgenthau, the father of political realism, stressed, "The point of departure of the foreign policy of any country should be the concept of national interests defined in terms of power." Forming a relatively stable, non-contradictory and self-coordinated system of national interests and geopolitical priorities is the indispensable precondition for optimizing the state building processes and elaborating an effective foreign policy strategy for Ukraine.<sup>24</sup>

The geopolitical situation and the historical heritage of Ukraine objectively determine the multidimensional character of Ukrainian foreign political orientations. Nevertheless, this multidimensional element should not appear as a lack of principles and an attempt to ride two horses, moving in opposite directions, at once. Moreover, this deep-rooted desire to compromise and to maintain a balance between opposing forces is nothing new for Ukraine. Historically, this has occurred several times, and as a rule, with unfortunate endings (e.g. the last period of the Kievan Rus, the Zaporizska Sich 15th century, and the Ukrainian People's Republic 1918). Simultaneously courting opposing powers and balancing on contradictions are dangerous and have always proven to be an effective temporary tactic but a poor long-term strategy.

By gaining its independence in August 1991, Ukraine started to implement a policy of neutrality, and from the beginning, Kiev favored relations with Western and Central Europe, as well as the United States and Canada. Coupled to these relations, Ukraine has also placed special importance on relations with Russia and the CIS

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

countries, which Ukraine has treated as "strategic partners." Coinciding with a so-called policy or strategy of "negation" in Kiev at that time, which hoped to rapidly establish distance from Russian's domination, Ukrainian officials have always used the term "strategic" as a synonym for "equivalence" in its relations with its Eastern neighbors. Contrarily, according to Russian interpretation, "strategic partnership" always meant closer and cordial relations with CIS states. To Russia such "normalization" is a decisive and crucial factor for establishing and maintaining stability in Europe.

Rejecting efforts to recreate any framework of the former USSR brand of cooperation, Ukrainian leaders have put an important emphasis on developing its relations with Central European states. Nevertheless, since late 1991, Ukraine has felt an ongoing disappointment concerning the character and degree of support Ukraine can expect from these countries. In 1991, the West, generally speaking, opposed Ukraine's independence. "This was demonstrated not only by U.S. President George Bush in his "Chicken Kiev" speech, in which he condemned "suicidal nationalism" and averred that freedom and independence were not the same."<sup>25</sup> Douglas Hurd, then British foreign secretary, delivered in March 1991 in Kiev one of the clearest warnings about what he called "destructive impulses of old nationalism" and stopped just short of stating that he opposed the idea of Ukrainian independence. The German Foreign Ministry and French President Francois Mitterrand uttered similar warnings. Diplomatic recognition of

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<sup>25</sup> *Bush Wants Improved Relations with Soviet Republics* USIS, U.S. Policy information and Texts 104 (2 August 1991) p.5

Ukraine and the establishment of diplomatic relations with it did not occur until Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev resigned on 25 December 1991.<sup>26</sup> "The recognition by the European Community and the USA of Ukraine as an independent state finally took place ... after months of patronizing remarks and demands made by the West," commented Serhiy Holovatyi.<sup>27</sup> Immediately following this independence, for the first time, the young Ukrainian diplomacy did not have access to influential circles and lobbies in foreign offices, parliaments and political parties in Western Europe. The only question that really interested or worried the West at that time was "What would happen to the nuclear weapons on the territory of the former Soviet Union?"<sup>28</sup>

Aside from the disappointment of securing partners in Central Europe, Ukraine's relations with Western Europe during 1992-1993 were also depressed. While Kiev has consistently attempted to balance Russia by cultivating alternative ties with the West, Western leaders in turn were careful not to antagonize Russia and therefore provided Ukraine with only the narrowest political and financial support. All these factors have continually fueled the domestic debate on the fate of nuclear weapons on Ukraine's soil. From 1991, more than any other Soviet successor state, Ukraine's foreign policy was tangled with security issues for both the country's leadership and the international community. Confirming its independent, sovereign status in Europe was very important for Ukraine during this period. Likewise, equally important was confirming its relation

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<sup>26</sup> Olga Alexandrova, *Ukraine in the World*, "Ukraine and Western Europe," Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p.146-147

<sup>27</sup> Serhiy Holovatyi, *Ukraine in the World*, "Ukraine in the After-the-Soviet Union Days," Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda. 1998. p.147

<sup>28</sup> Olga Alexandrova , *Ukraine in the World*, "Ukraine and Western Europe," Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p.148

with European countries, the USA and Canada in hopes that this recognition by the West might guarantee Ukraine's nationality and statehood. At the same time, Ukraine aspired to estrange itself from Russia, which desired to once again control Ukraine. Therefore, Ukraine adopted a policy of neutrality and tried to balance between the West and Russia. By adopting such a policy, Ukraine hoped to obtain its main aim: reaching full sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, political stability, and economical prosperity.

Only after this period of neglect did the West begin to recognize Ukraine's significance and its potential role in European affairs. A discernible Western policy shift toward Ukraine first began to emerge in 1994, but this shift in the Western position toward Ukraine was clearly prudent and reserved.<sup>29</sup> After 1994, the political situation changed and as Ukraine started to develop a firmer relationship with the West, (sometimes very successfully), the West had to reconsider its official policy.

## **2. Evolution of Ukrainian Strategy**

National Security Council Secretary Volodymyr Horbulin, a leading adviser to President Leonid Kuchma, has signaled in 1997, that Ukraine is now rethinking its official policy of neutrality. Horbulin said in his letter to the parliamentary Foreign and CIS Relations Committee, which was made public, that Ukraine's "absolute neutral and non-aligned status" could be viewed "only conditionally." He added that Ukraine's

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<sup>29</sup> Olga Alexandrova, *Ukraine in the World*, "Ukraine and Western Europe," Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p.149

"sensitive geopolitical position" makes full neutrality impossible and that although Ukraine has not officially considered applying for NATO membership, it reserves the right as a member of the UN to join any political or military union.<sup>30</sup>

The survival of Ukraine as a free and independent nation in the contemporary world with its fundamental national interests intact, its economic and political sovereignty and socio-cultural identity secure should become the major principle of Ukrainian strategy in achieving its national interests. Another immense task is transforming Ukraine from being an object or a pawn in the geopolitical games of "Super Powers" into an independent actor that defines its own goals and its own behavior (Naturally, taking into account both its own possibilities and welfare and the welfare of the international environment).<sup>31</sup>

Ukraine's constitution describes its foreign policy as a means of "ensuring its national interests and security." The latter is outlined, identified and assessed by the 1997 Concept of the National Security of Ukraine. The national interests and objectives of the state security policy include:

- Elevating living standards;
- Improving social security;
- Reforming the national economy;

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<sup>30</sup> V. Horbulin, *Ukraine is Rethinking Its Policy*, Interview for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 05 May 1997, Available [on line]: [<http://www.rferl.org/newsline/1997/05/o70597.html>], November 2000

<sup>31</sup> O. Honcharenko, O. Strelak, *Ukraine 2000 and Beyond: Geopolitical Priorities and Securities of Development*. Ukrainian National Institute for Strategic research 2000, Available: [on line] [<http://www.niss.gov.ua/book/engl/005htmn>], December 2000

- Enhancing the efficiency of government structures;
- Strengthening the civil society;
- Fighting corruption; and,
- Protecting national resources.

However, an important distinction, which is characteristic for today's assessment of national interests, was introduced at an early stage: "The commitment to neutrality and non-alignment must not prevent [Ukraine] from a comprehensive participation in the all-European security architecture."<sup>32</sup> The concept of National Security does not explicitly endorse the principle of neutrality. Representatives of the executive branch, the most prominent representative being the president, have repeatedly stated that NATO membership would serve the country's national interests better than a further non-alignment policy.

The new Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Anatoliy Zlenko, at a conference in Kiev on January 25, 2001, made several essential points for the future efforts of his Ministry. He said that developing the strategic partnerships with the USA and Russia, consolidating relationships with Poland, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Moldova, and Belorussia, and consolidating partnerships with Germany, Great Britain, and France are the necessities by which Ukraine must confirm its place in European space. Other key points are the accession of Ukraine into the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Ukraine's advancing to the European Union (EU). Also essential points of Ukraine's

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

future policy are deepening and confirming the relationships with NATO, and seeking the realization of Ukrainian initiatives into the OSCE and other regional structures. These are, according to Zlenko's speech, the key points of the Ukrainian foreign policy for the year 2001.<sup>33</sup>

In short, Ukrainian external and internal policy resulted from a policy of full neutrality from the first stage of Ukrainian statehood, which helped the young state survive. After that challenging beginning, this policy was transformed under the influences of the international situation. Following these events, the concept of securing Ukraine's vital national interests led the nation to embrace an "only conditional" and "neutral and non-alignment status," which allowed Ukraine to apply to NATO and to reserve the right as a member of the UN to join any political or military union. These last points are vital for Ukraine's future development in the political and economical sphere.

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<sup>33</sup> A. Zlenko *Speech on the Briefing of Ministry of Foreign Affairs at 25.01.2001*, YFS of Ukraine 2001, Available [on line]: [[http://www.liga.kiev.ua/cgi.lenta/show\\_print.cgi?id=6869](http://www.liga.kiev.ua/cgi.lenta/show_print.cgi?id=6869)], February 2001

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### **III. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UKRAINE AND NATO**

#### **A. CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS.**

A "security earthquake" shook Europe during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Limited crises reappeared and began to haunt Europe, making NATO look outward and to take steps to project stability, so its new mechanism became "cooperation."<sup>34</sup> Since Ukraine's independence at the end of 1991, NATO has been the Western institution concerning Ukraine the most. From the onset of Ukrainian independence, the primary question was, "Will Ukraine remain an independent state?" NATO has played an important role in ensuring that the answer to this important question "yes." Why does NATO hold such an important position in the mindset of Ukraine? The answer to this question is that of all the Western's institutions, with which Ukraine is developing closer relations, NATO is the most reliable and capable pillar of European security.<sup>35</sup>

Relations between Ukraine and NATO began when Ukraine joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, and then later in 1994, Ukraine joined the Partnership for Peace program (PfP). In July 1997, NATO leaders and the Ukrainian President signed a "Chapter for a Distinctive Partnership between North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Ukraine." According to this Charter both sides committed themselves "to further broaden

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<sup>34</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Partnership for Peace (PfP): After the Washington Summit and Kosovo*, Institute for National Strategic Studies, Number 167, August 1999, Available [on line]: [<http://www.ndu.edu/inss/strforum/forum167.html>], January 2001

<sup>35</sup> Volodimir Horbulin, *Ukraine's Contribution to Security and Stability in Europe*, Webedition NATO Review, Vol.46 – No.3, 1998, pp.9-12

and strengthen their cooperation and to develop a distinctive and effective partnership, which will promote further stability and common democratic values in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>36</sup> The NATO-Ukraine Charter has opened new vistas of cooperation, providing a firm basis for the further dynamic development of this relation. The most concrete result of the Charter was creating the NATO-Ukraine Commission, a forum in which Ukraine meets with the 16 NATO allies for consultations on a broad range of political and military cooperation activities. (The Commission has met twice at the level of Foreign Ministers, once at the Defense Ministers' level, and periodic meetings take place at the level of Ambassadors.) The consultations have covered such issues as strengthening cooperation in peacekeeping, creating a Joint Group on Defense Reform and the implementing a Joint Group on Civil Emergency Planning.

The Ukrainian Mission to NATO, including a military representative, has been established in 1997, and Ukraine was represented in the Partnership Coordination Cell (PCC) at Mons, Belgium.<sup>37</sup> On the military side, the Ukrainian military representative to NATO assumed his duties in January and soon after that, a NATO liaison officer was posted to Kiev. This allow Ukraine to elevate its military ties with the Alliance, providing opportunities to learn more about each other's armed forces and for Ukraine to gain useful experience relevant to reforming the military.<sup>38</sup> On December 16, 1997, a

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<sup>36</sup>NATO Basic Text: *Chapter for a Distinctive Partnership between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Ukraine*, Madrid, 9 July 1997, At the heading is: "NATO: Sommet Madrid, 89VII, 1997,

<sup>37</sup>NATO handbook, *NATO's Partnership with Ukraine*, Second reprint 1998-1999, Chapter 4, p. 103

<sup>38</sup> Volodimir Horbulin, *Ukraine's Contribution to Security and Stability in Europe*, Webdition NATO Review, Vol.46 – No.3 1998, pp.9-12

memorandum of understanding on Civil-Emergency Planning and Disaster Preparedness was signed between Ukraine and NATO.

Ukrainian has made significant contributions to international peacekeeping activities in participating in the Implementation Force in Bosnia (IFOR). In the summer of 1992, the Ukrainian military were among the first to don “blue helmets” and to execute the missions assigned to them in the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In December 1996, UKRBAT was included into IFOR to support the Dayton Agreements. Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia consists of a mechanized infantry battalion and helicopter squadron. From early 1999, the UKRBAT operated as a part of the SFOR. Recently, Ukrainian peacekeepers, representing 11 rotations, secured their area of responsibility (400sg.km.) in the area of Bosnian. This area is a crossroads for Muslim, Croatian and Serbian interests. This area also contains the vitally important Mostar-Sarajevo highway. The UKRBAT forces secured the only available bridge over the Neretva River and executed other assigned missions. Also in the UN force in Eastern Slovenia, Ukraine took part in the International Police Task Force and the creation of a joint peacekeeping Battalion with Poland. Although this contribution in Bosnia has now ended, Ukraine is now providing troops and airmen to the UN-Mandated KFOR peacekeeping mission in Kosovo.

In the UN force in Eastern Slovenia, Ukraine took part in the International Police Task Force. Since April 1994 until 1995, 550 servicemen, belonging to 2<sup>nd</sup> Ukraine's Special Battalion (UKRBAT-2), have been successfully fulfilling missions assigned by UN Command. Clearly, UKRBAT-2 contributed much to the history of Ukrainian

peacekeeping. In particular, thanks to the singular efforts of the Ukrainian military, losses of civilians were minimized during the Croatians offensive operation “Storm” conducted in July 1995.<sup>39</sup>

Since independence at the end of 1991, Ukraine has not only pursued the goal of integration into European and transatlantic institutions, but has sought to contribute to security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. First of all, Ukraine has initiated political and economic reform at home. Despite the political and social diversity of Ukrainian society, Ukraine has managed to implement these reforms exclusively through peaceful, civilized means, with no ensuing mass riots, clashes or by resorting to force against political opponents during this transition. Second, Ukraine has participated in peacekeeping and humanitarian missions abroad. Third, Ukraine has set an unprecedented example for the world by eliminating nuclear arms.

The historic importance of Ukraine's unprecedented decision voluntarily to renounce its nuclear weapons and join the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear weapon state should not be underestimated. The significance of the complete withdrawal of all nuclear weapons from Ukraine's territory and the contribution this represents to reducing the nuclear threat and to creating common security space in

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<sup>39</sup> Ukrainian Ministry of Defense, *Ukrainian Peacekeepers*, Correct on 2001, Available [on line]: [<http://www.mil.gov.ua/eng/peacekeepers/b&h.htm>], January 2001

Europe was duly noted in the 1996 Lisbon Summit Declaration of the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).<sup>40</sup>

This far-reaching partnership does not necessarily mean that Ukraine is seeking to join the Alliance, at least at this stage. Truthfully, Ukraine is not yet ready to become a NATO member, both in terms of meeting the necessary criteria (first of all economic) and in terms of altering the public's perception in Ukraine.

Unfortunately, during the first three years, the government paid minimal attention to economically developing the nation. Now Ukraine is facing a severe economical crisis. Ukraine's foreign debt stands at \$12 billion, (of which \$3.1 billion is due to be paid next year) while the National Bank's reserves total \$1.3 billion. The government's "domestic" debt in unpaid wages, pensions, and social benefits totals \$2.5 billion. Some 80 percent of the population lives below the poverty line and real unemployment stands at 25 percent.<sup>41</sup> In this situation, stabilizing the national economy is a problem compounded by the heavy burden of repairing the damage from the Chernobyl disaster, which has become the most difficult environmental and economic problem for Ukraine today. Therefore, in light of all of these complex issues serious political and economic support and assistance for Ukraine from the international community would be an

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<sup>40</sup> Volodimir Horbulin, *Ukraine's Contribution to Security and Stability in Europe*, Webdition NATO Review, Vol.46 – No.3 1998, pp.9-12

<sup>41</sup> Emerging Europe Research Group, *Crisis in Ukraine*, Copyring March 2000, p.1 Available [on line]: [<http://www.eerg.com/government/Ukraine/crisis.htm>], November 2000

investment in creating and stabilizing a democratic Ukraine, just as such support would assist any other country in the whole of Europe.

Unfortunately, despite this successful beginning in building close relations with the West and NATO, the inception of the Kosovo crisis (in 1998-1999) undermined this bond temporarily. Although Ukraine had courted the favor of the West and NATO, the Kosovo crisis generated the first serious split between Ukraine and NATO. All parliamentary deputies in Ukraine agreed to unilaterally oppose NATO's campaign of bombing Kosovo. In addition, in April 1999 the Rada (Parliament) adopted a resolution against NATO's actions. It also called for the dismissal of those Ukrainian officials who advocated a pro-West foreign policy (such as former Foreign Minister Tarasyuk), for the suspension of the NIDC activities, for the recalling of the Ukrainian Mission to NATO in Brussels, and for an end to Ukraine's participation in the PfP.<sup>42</sup>

However, none of these drastic steps took place. On the contrary, President Kuchma even attempted to mediate a settlement of the conflict during NATO's 50th Anniversary Summit in Washington. Ukraine's attendance at the summit in the wake of strong anti-NATO sentiments at home and in Russia clearly demonstrated the Ukrainian executive's commitment to maintaining and enhancing positive relations with the Alliance.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, while Ukraine's leadership has not changed their views on

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<sup>42</sup> J.D. Patterson Moroney, *NATO's Strategic Engagement with Ukraine and Central Europe in the Aftermath of Kosovo*, Available [on line]: [<http://wwics.siedu/kennan/Ukraine/briefs/moroney.htm>], December 2000

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

NATO after the Kosovo crisis, the public perception of NATO has worsened, according to a poll conducted in mid 2000 by the Ukrainian Center for Economic and Political Studies. During the last three years the number of Ukrainians considering NATO an aggressive military bloc has tripled and more than half think that Ukraine should never join it. NATO's military intervention in Kosovo even increased anti-NATO feelings in western Ukraine, a region that used to be solidly pro-NATO. After Kosovo, Western Ukrainians now have as negative a view of NATO as Crimean.<sup>44</sup> In this situation, it is important that government structures working with NATO (e.g. the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Emergency Planning, etc.) provide the necessary information about their tasks.

The Ukrainian media failed to explain, and continues to do so, the government's NATO policy. It was the role of the media to fully explain the advantages, the importance and the policy needed for Ukraine to develop relationships with NATO, the EU, the WEU, the OSCE and other Western structures and organizations. This could have helped people better understand the modern political situations and to create a more politically active society in the country.

After these events and the Kosovo crisis, perhaps it was highly significant that the North Atlantic Council (NAC), which is NATO's decision-making body, in its dual capacity as the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC), met in Kiev in March 2000. This was the first time the NAC ever held its summit outside the territory of its member-states.

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<sup>44</sup> Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine and NATO*, October 15, 2000, Available [on line]: [<http://www.ualberta.ca/~cius/stasiuk/st-articles/an Ukr-nato.htm>], December 2000

This decision can be interpreted in several ways, including NATO's desire to demonstrate outright support for Ukraine, or perhaps even more importantly, it can be seen as a warning to Russia that NATO, seeking to expand its influence in the region, is eager to attract Ukraine to the Western camp.<sup>45</sup> In preparation for the NAC-NUC meetings, the Rada ratified the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), which determined the legal status and provided the necessary legal protection of NATO countries' forces. Further, the Rada also ratified the Open Skies Treaty, which allowed its signatories to conduct supervisory flights over each other's territories. The ratification of these agreements can be viewed as an indication that a majority of Rada deputies are intent on furthering cooperation with NATO, even in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict.<sup>46</sup> The creation of these two agreements has also resulted in the removal of many practical barriers to the partnership.

The more important of these barriers have been economic, which was evidenced when often and without warning, the Ukrainian MoD was forced to cancel planned military activities with NATO and bilaterally with the US due to a lack of adequate financing. Even today Ukraine often expects NATO to pay entirely for such events because Ukraine cannot cope with its share of the finances. Another barrier is the NATO and Ukrainian bureaucracies which both seem to be operating without any clear-cut strategic objectives with regard to each other. Still another problem that inhibits

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<sup>45</sup> President Clinton's Speech on the Meeting with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma on June 5, 2000, Kiev's Summit, Ukrainian newspaper, *The Day*, June 6, 2000

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

communication and resolving issues is that knowledge of Ukraine in the West and of the West in Ukraine remains limited.

Finally, on many occasions it has become clear that NATO and Ukrainian officials are not talking *to* but rather *around* one another, which highlights the divergences in their diplomatic tactics and practices and thus their overall approach to each other on a political level.

Overall, NATO and Ukraine need to learn how to understand each other better, and this will take time, patience, and forward-looking goals.

#### **B. PARTICIPATION OF UKRAINE IN THE PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE PROGRAM \***

NATO's Partnership for Peace program was started in January of 1994. The main goal of this program was increasing stability and security throughout Europe. The basic aims of this program were laid out in 1994, and they continue to be valid now. They include the following:

- Increasing transparency in national defense planning and military budgeting;

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\* The chapter gives a brief review of Ukrainian participation in the PFP Program, based on the facts derived largely from articles: by Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine and NATO*, October 2000, Available [on line]: [<http://www.uaiberta.ca-ciis/stasiuk/st-articles/an-ukr-nato.htm>]. December 2000, and Ukrainian Ministry of Defense, *Ukrainian Peacekeepers*, Correct on 2001, Available [on line]: [<http://www.mil.gov.ua/eng/peacekeepers/b&h.htm>], January 2001

- Ensuring democratic control of national armed forces;
- Developing Partner country forces that are better able to operate with those of NATO members.

Many experts consider the PFP a permanent feature of the European security architecture, the biennial program, in which Allies and Partners participate. This program is quite significant because the process of "self-differentiation"—one of the key principles of the PFP—allows the nations to choose activities from the PFP that support their national policies and interests, and meet their specific requirements in accordance with their financial means.<sup>47</sup> Since its inception at the January 1994 Brussels Summit, the Partnership for Peace program has undergone an enormous change. For the first time, some countries in the CEE saw the PfP as a palliative to enlargement of NATO breadth, but the PfP actually moved non-NATO members beyond the point of a dialogue and into a genuine, practical partnership. At this time, the PfP developed a framework and process; it established the norm that partners should be "contributors" and marked a shift from purely multilateral dialogue to bilateral (partner and Alliance) relationships in the form of Individual Partnership Programs (IPPs) and self-differentiation. It established a wide sphere of cooperation to include the Planning and Review Process (PARP), transparency, civil control or oversight of the military, and peace support operations.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> NATO fact sheets, *Partnership for Peace an Enhanced and More Operational Partnership*, Correct as on April 1999, Available [on line]: [<http://www.nato.int/docu/facts/2000/pfp-enh.htm>], November 2000

<sup>48</sup> J.D. Patterson Moroney, *NATO's Strategic Engagement with Ukraine and Central Europe in Aftermath of Kosovo*, Available [on line]: [<http://wwics.siedu/kennan/Ukraine/briefs/moroney.htm>], November 2000

After the Madrid Summit in July 1997, the PfP became more relevant and operational because the PfP and a second PARP cycle was enhanced. The role of the partners increased in the daily work of the PfP, particularly with the establishment at several NATO headquarters of Partnership Staff Elements, whereby NATO and Partner officers are integrated in international staff functions on a permanent basis. In 1997, the NATO Allies decided to enhance the PfP by giving it a more operational role. This decision was made partly on the basis of experience gained through the multi-national cooperation that has taken place through peacekeeping missions in Bosnia: IFOR and SFOR. This in turn provided greater involvement of the partners in decision-making and the planning process, and strengthened its dimension of political consultation.

This enhancement of the PfP was built on the following three elements:

- A Political-Military Framework for NATO-led PfP operations;
- An expanded and adapted Planning and Review Process (PARP); and
- Enhanced practical military and defense-related cooperation covering the full spectrum of cooperation in PfP<sup>49</sup>

This enhancement also marked the introduction of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)—which replaced the NACC—and the creation of the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council (PJC) and the NATO-Ukraine Commission to keep Russia and Ukraine engaged in the partnership.

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<sup>49</sup> NATO fact sheets, *Partnership for Peace an Enhanced and more operational partnership*, Correct as on April 1999, Available [on line]:[<http://www.nato.int/docu/facts/2000/pfp-enh.htm>], November 2000

Ukraine was the first CIS state to join the PfP in February 1995 and has remained an enthusiastic member ever since. Since 1995, Ukraine has been one of the most active participants in the PfP and its program, "The Spirit of PfP," organized by individual NATO member states (the USA). Ukraine, at the end of 1999, had taken part in 200 PfP events and 12 drills. Ukraine's military cooperation within "The Spirit of PfP" has been very extensive with the UK and USA in naval, peacekeeping, army, counter-terrorism and airborne exercises. From 1996 to 2000, Ukraine was the country with which the UK had the largest bilateral military program in Europe. Ninety activities were conducted each year with the military, with border troops and with the National Guard forces.

The annual exercises, "Sea Breeze" in Odessa, which was organized by the US, attracted upwards of ten NATO and PfP countries. National Guard troops exercised "Guard-Partnership" between the U.S. and Ukraine have also undertaken in Ukraine and then in the U.S. The first Ukrainian-British peacekeeping exercises, "Cossack Express," took place at the Yavoriv training ground in western Ukraine in September 1999. Earlier joint British-Ukrainian-Polish exercises, "Cossack Steppe," took place at the Stanford training area, Norfolk, England. The Yavoriv military training ground in Western Ukraine, one of the largest in Europe, was the first former military facility from the USSR leased by NATO in 1999 for the PfP exercises. The annual "Peace-Shield" PfP exercises took place in July 2000 at this facility. This exercise was attended by 1,400 military personnel from 20 NATO and PfP members. The exercises focused on practicing common procedures for the conduct of UN-authorized, NATO-led peacekeeping missions. The largest naval, air and amphibious exercise, "Cooperative Partner-2000,"

yet conducted by NATO in the former USSR took place in the Black Sea in June of 2000. In this exercise, ten NATO member states and six partner countries (Russia declined an invitation to take part) participated. Fifty naval ships were involved, including those from the Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED) and from NATO's newly created "Maritime Mine Countermeasure Force Mediterranean" (MCMFORMED), as well as thirty aircraft, forty armored vehicles and 5,500 personnel.

The exercises, "Cooperative Partner-2000," were designed to promote a common understanding of NATO Peace Support Operations doctrine and training. Here multinational staffs of allied and partner countries practiced the planning of operations by assimilating command, control and communications procedures, and advancing the interoperability of maritime and amphibious NATO and partner forces. Nearly 900 Ukrainian marines were involved.

NATO also encouraged bilateral military co-operation between Poland and Ukraine, which was supported by the UK, in creating a joint peacekeeping battalion. The battalion was sent in March to serve in Kosovo under NATO command and represents the battalion's first mission abroad. At present, the Ukrainian element in the unit includes 270 soldiers and 20 internal troops. Polish Defense Minister Bronislaw Komorowski and Ukraine Defense Minister Olexandr Kuzmuk outlined a three-fold purpose of the unit. First, it contributes to European security, forms a link between Ukraine and NATO, and provides training for Ukraine's troops within NATO's Military Reform Aid Program. Ukrainian and Polish troops are also to be deployed side by side on the Lebanese-Israeli

border as part of UNIFIL. The 650-strong Ukrainian contingent is composed of engineer troops.

The introduction of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiative in 1994 added a new dimension to the relationship between NATO and its Partner Countries, enabling practical military cooperation in accordance with the different interests and potentials of the participating countries.<sup>50</sup> Robust participation by Ukraine in the PfP, which provides programs of practical defense-related activities involving Allies and Partners, offers Ukraine enormous opportunities to assess its defense establishment, and thus to help it better define its role in Europe. In tandem with this defense role, the Allies would welcome Ukraine's increased involvement in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), which metaphorically speaking is the political "roof" over the PfP.

### C. THE IMPORTANCE OF PFP-UKRAINIAN RELATIONSHIP

The geopolitical position of Ukraine is such that the question of forming the nation's external policy in relation to European security becomes crucial. In fact, without doubt, it is the key point of its policy. An objective analysis shows the developing relationships between Ukraine and NATO, the present NATO enlargement proposal could expand the stability zone in Europe. The NATO area is now the most stable region in Europe, and close relations with NATO could mean enlarging this region

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<sup>50</sup> NATO Handbook, *The Opening Up of the Alliance: Partnership for Peace, Scope and Objectives*. NATO – 1110, Brussels, Belgium, 1998-1999, Second Reprint. p.86

of stability. Secondly, the NATO enlargement could lead to closer relations between Ukraine and Western Europe. Such relations in the political and economic spheres could allow Ukraine to develop a broader range of relations and reduce the strong orientation to the CIS.<sup>51</sup> If Ukraine cannot create a bond with NATO, and if relations between NATO and Russia are not normalized or other variants are found, Ukraine will find itself virtually surrounded by two possibly hostile powers: NATO from the south and west, and Russia from the north and east. History shows that such a situation is likely dangerous, even for a stable country. For Ukraine, which is in the early stages of state building, and enduring an economic crisis, this position between “hammer and anvil” is extremely dangerous. In such a situation, each side could continually try to play the “Ukrainian card” against each other.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, Ukraine (according to its Declaration of Sovereignty) is independent of all blocs and neutral. Many types of neutrality are in evidence around the world, yet for Ukraine, the issue of neutrality has little bearing on whether it should enter NATO or not. According to its policy and its constitution, Ukraine's main goal is achieving full sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, political stability, and economic prosperity. Ukraine, as an independent entity, has the inalienable right to apply to NATO for membership, as well as the right to join any other political or military union it deems essential in moving it toward achieving its national goals.

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<sup>51</sup>Alexander Kramarevsky, *NATO and Ukraine: Ukraine and European Security*. Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 1-No.3, 1998, Available [on line]: [<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/grupa/percept/i3/I3-4.htm>], January 2001

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

Many traditionally neutral countries (Austria, Finland, Sweden, and Switzerland) are now studying the possibility of ending their neutrality, regarding it as a remnant of the Cold War. After World War II, these little countries' neutrality had considerable military and political significance because it allowed them to stand aside from military confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. With the disintegration of the USSR and the reduction in military confrontations in Europe, the politicians of these countries now understand that their neutrality can keep them outside the processes of world integration and could lead to significant economic and political losses. Integration in the world is no longer necessarily on military lines, but can be based on economic, political, religious, ethnic, geographic or some other factors. So, while these countries want to preserve military neutrality, they do not want to observe economic and political neutrality.

Ukraine's bond with NATO could provide stability and assistance, so Ukraine could consolidate domestic reforms, improve relations in Central and Eastern European countries (CEE), and integrate with the West. Such a bond with NATO could benefit the emerging democracy in Ukraine by creating a stable environment in which the nation could consolidate its democracy, establish economic reforms, institute a market economy, and reform the military. Of course, close relationships among Ukraine and NATO, the EU, and the WEU will also depend in part on Ukraine's efforts to improve relations with their neighbors in the CEE.

NATO could also help Ukraine achieve its main goals of integrating with the West. Senator Lugar wrote, "Membership in NATO is a way to strengthen the domestic forces' committed to democracy and market economies."

East-Central Europe's democrats thoroughly understand that democracy will succeed only if their states belong to a secure European and Western political, economic, and military community. The West, too, previously understood this link, as demonstrated by the case of West Germany. That nation might never have become a stable Western democracy had it not been accepted into NATO's fold. Similarly, NATO membership helped stabilize democracy and stem authoritarian backsliding in Portugal, Spain, Greece and Turkey. Those who insist that democratic credentials must be presented prior to alliance membership should remember that the need for a stable security framework is greatest when democracy is most fragile and threatened.<sup>53</sup> The inclusion in the EU and the WEU will be helpful for Ukraine, but only NATO is the preeminent security institution and only NATO membership provides American security assurances. Therefore, the bond between Ukraine and the USA is another important factor, which plays a special role in the Ukrainian step toward true democracy.

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<sup>53</sup> James W. Morrison, *NATO Expansion and Alternative Future Security in Europe*, Institute for National Strategic Studies, p.8-12, Available [on line]: [<http://www.ndu.edu/inss/macnair/m040ch2a.html>], November 2000

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## **IV. RELATIONS AMONG UKRAINE, THE USA, AND RUSSIA, AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UKRAINE AND NATO**

### **A. RELATIONS BETWEEN UKRAINE AND THE UNITED STATES**

Relations between the United States and Ukraine, formally established in January 1992, a month after Ukraine's referendum on independence, have developed rapidly since the two sides resolved their deadlock over nuclear disarmament.

Kiev is now a frequent stop for senior American officials. The U.S. and Ukraine have formed a bilateral commission headed by the Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and then United States Vice-President Al Gore to tackle outstanding foreign policy, security, and economic issues. Since then, Ukraine has become a leading recipient of U.S. foreign assistance. In October 1996, the two nations declared their relationship a "strategic partnership." Yet, the course of U.S.-Ukrainian relations has not always run so smoothly. In the first two years "nuclear" issues dominated and crowded other questions off the agenda.

After that, the Kosovo crisis was the first serious split between Washington and Kiev. But, that conflict was mediated during NATO's 50th Anniversary Summit in Washington, and the ratification of two very important agreements can be viewed as an indication that a majority of Rada's (Ukrainian Parliament) deputies are intent on furthering cooperation with NATO and USA, even in the aftermath of this conflict.

Before examining the bilateral U.S.-Ukrainian ties, it is useful to remember what a little foundation had been laid before them. One U.S. official viewed Ukraine's declaration of sovereignty and its subsequent moves to separate Ukraine from the USSR with shock and horror. President Bush delivered his warning against "suicidal nationalism" in Kiev, in his speech, just three weeks before the events that led to the fall of the Soviet Union.<sup>54</sup>

From the first dialogues between the USA and Ukraine, the nuclear issue was the primary basis for developing their relations. At that point, everything revolved around that dramatic and monumental topic. Many critics said that the most successful U.S. policy approach toward Ukraine, namely—mixing incentives for expanding political relations and economic reform with a continued firmness on nuclear disarmament—should have been tried from the beginning, not after nearly two years of misunderstanding and mutual recriminations.<sup>55</sup> If these relationships had developed normally, the nuclear issue could not have been indefinitely postponed during the first phase of discussions. According to Sherman W. Garnett, these relationships had three phases. The first phase entailed declarations and romanticism on the Ukrainian side and great anxiety on the part of the West: this phase lasted from 1990 until mid 1992. Kiev had great expectations, both moral and material, of global support. Western leaders on

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<sup>54</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, *Ukraine in the World*, "U.S. – Ukrainian Relations: Past, Present, and Future," Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p.104

<sup>55</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe*, "Ukraine and the West: Lessons of Nuclear Disarmament," Brookings Institution Press, 1997, p.113

the other hand, feared the impending collapse of the Soviet Union, (they trusted President Gorbachev); after that they also feared a fearsome conflict between Ukraine and Russia. Precisely, at this time, President Bush in a speech in Kiev cautioned about the dangers of "suicidal nationalism," which was really occurring in Ukraine at that time.<sup>56</sup>

The second phase of U.S.-Ukraine relations began with the signing of the Lisbon Protocol (Spring 1992) and ended with the U.S.-Ukrainian- Russian Agreement in January 1994. Ukraine became a part of START I. Of course, what appeared to the West to be the end was merely the beginning for Ukraine. Ukraine coming face to face with the realities of statehood: economic hardship, regional tensions, and a new relationship with Russia over possession of the Black Sea Fleet was reaching its first real hurdles.

The third phase of relationship building concerned the implementation of Ukraine's nuclear commitments and the broadening of U.S.-Ukrainian ties. This phase started with the Trilateral Agreement in January 1994 and ended in June 1996 with the removal of Ukraine's last nuclear weapons. In the beginning, the nuclear issue dominated the U.S.-Ukrainian relations. Unfortunately, the first group of specialists knew a great deal about nuclear weapons but little about Ukraine. The Ukrainian side was also hampered by its lack of expertise on this specific issue.

Ukraine, however, did have at that time a small but talented group of officials, often with experience in the Soviet Ukrainian Diplomatic Service. Outside the upper reaches of the president's staff, the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Defense,

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p.114-115.

positions were filled with inexperienced and sometimes unimaginative officials. All of these factors complicated the first steps in the U.S.-Ukrainian relations.

The U.S. side was continually frustrated by the lack of decentralization on the Ukrainian side and by what it considered “technical matters.” For the Ukrainians, however, there were no technical matters that were not somehow connected to strategic decisions about the Ukrainian security policy and the consolidation of the Ukrainian state. In many respects, U.S. policy toward Ukraine still rides on the momentum created by nuclear disarmament. The most important topic was the security.

This period of nuclear disarmament had three key policies:

- The spring 1993 Lisbon Protocol, protocol to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan (those states on whose territory strategic nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union were located);
- The response to the Ukrainian Parliament’s conditional ratification of START-1 in November 1993;
- The conclusion of the Trilateral Agreement in January 1994.

During this phase (from mid-1992 until the conclusion of the Trilateral Agreement in January 1994), U.S. assistance was not only money well spent, it was also

vital to support a process of disarmament and vital national interests of all nations involved.<sup>57</sup>

To the relief of many people both internally and externally, the last Soviet warhead left Ukraine in mid-1996, and Ukraine formally acceded to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as a non-nuclear weapon state and received a set of security assurances from the NPT Depository States. During this intense period, U.S.—Ukrainian relations appeared on the verge of collapse several times. Yet at crucial moments, the U.S. Ukrainian and Russian negotiators found the right mixture of compromise. The Ukrainian government, prodded by critics in the Ukrainian Parliament, stressed that during the nuclear disarmament meetings, Ukraine should required real negotiations about economic and security conditions.<sup>58</sup> President Kravchuk said that Ukraine should have “appropriate compensation” for nuclear disarmament and, in addition, “certain guarantees” for its security. On February, Rada formally postponed the considered ratification of START I.<sup>59</sup>

In Ukraine itself the process of nuclear disarmament became entangled in a power struggle between the President, the Prime minister and the Parliament. The nationalistic opposition especially put President Kravchuk under enormous pressure. The main reason

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<sup>57</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, *Ukraine in the World*, “U.S.—Ukrainian Relations: Past, Present, and Future,” Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p.105-114

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p.104

<sup>59</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe*, “Ukraine and the West: Lessons of Nuclear Disarmament,” Brookings Institution Press. 1997, p.116

for the protracted and contradictory process of the denuclearization of Ukraine can be seen in the fact that the nuclear weapons in Ukraine reflected the problems of nation and state building and really were a topic of internal debate. This debate was characterized by conflicting views of the future foreign and security policy orientation of Ukraine. One of the most important driving forces that led to this process was Russia's threatening perception of the Ukrainian actors. Ukraine really wanted to secure the fragile independence of its new state, which is also why they demanded security guarantees, and a compensation for the fissile material in the nuclear warheads and economic assistance.

Neither the United States nor Russia really considered the security fears that existed in Ukraine. Instead they quickly found a common interest in the denuclearization of Ukraine. This was fuelled by their own fears of a proliferation of fissile material, related technology and "know-how" on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

In January 1994, Ukraine still had an estimated:

- 1,656 nuclear warheads on its territory, carried by 120 SS-19 missiles (at two sites),
- 46 SS-24 missiles (silo bases, one site collocated with SS-19s), and 42 nuclear bombers (22 Tu-95s, each able to carry 16 AS-15 air-launched cruise missiles, ALCMs),

- 20 Tu-160s, (each able to carry 12 AS-15 ALCMs).<sup>60</sup>

Washington's "Russia-First" policy and the focus on only diplomatic pressure as well as the tensions in the difficult Ukrainian-Russian relationship further heightened the perception of the big threatening northern neighbor.

According to interviews with former Ukrainian decision-makers, such as Leonid Kravchuk, Boris Tarasyuk and Anton Buteiko, we can see that the denuclearization of Ukraine was unavoidable due to the technical reality of the nuclear weapons themselves. Clearly, from the beginning, Ukraine was "damned" to give up the nuclear weapons stationed on Ukrainian territory because Kiev was technically dependent on Russia for spare parts.

These spare parts, such as tritium capsules or spare parts used for the refueling of the heptyl in the SS-19s, were necessary in order to maintain the weapons systems and to guarantee their technical security. The exchange of these spare parts also had to be done within certain time frames.

Moreover, Kiev was unable to control or even to use the nuclear weapons, for the central control and command system was based in Moscow. Furthermore, the withdrawal of the tactical nuclear weapon—the only weapons that could actually have been used—

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<sup>60</sup> Peter van Ham, *Ukraine, Russia, and European Security: Implications for Western Policy*, Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, Paris - February 1994, Available [on line]: [<http://www.weu.int/institite/chaillot/chai13e.htm#chap2>], January 2001

from the territory of Ukraine within the framework of the Bush-Gorbachev-Initiatives had already started while the Soviet Union still existed.

Only a small group of technical and military experts in Ukraine were aware of these facts. However, they did not have any influence on the decision-making process. Besides that, most politicians were not competent enough to understand the complex nature of the nuclear weapons. The main decision-makers though seemed to be able to evaluate the technical implications connected to the nuclear weapons quite soon. Apart from that, it was the sincere desire of many actors in Ukraine to give up the nuclear weapons. This desire stemmed from the historical experience of Soviet oppression, which Ukrainians had endured, as well as the very strong anti-nuclear sentiments in the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster. Nevertheless it was only in January 1994 when the Trilateral Agreement between the USA, Russia and Ukraine was signed and in November of 1994 when Ukraine acceded to the NPT as a non-nuclear state.<sup>61</sup>

Aside from all these conflicts and disagreements and misunderstandings, these nuclear negotiations in that period created basic personal and institutional links between the U.S. and Ukraine, beginning a pattern of U.S. engagement and cooperation with Ukraine.

Overestimating the importance of this period of U.S.-Ukrainian relations is virtually impossible. Once the Trilateral Statement was signed, political ties between the

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<sup>61</sup> Kulinich M.A, *The Nuclear Disarmament of Ukraine 1991-1996*, “Ukraine in the New Geopolitical Space,” Kiev, *Nauka I Oborona*, 1997, pp.98-118

two countries rapidly expanded. The visit of President Kravchuk in Washington in 1994 started the program of technical assistance. The election of Leonid Kuchma as president in the summer of 1994, and his economic reform added further momentum to the relationship. Ukraine became the third largest recipient of U.S. foreign assistance. In 1995 President Clinton himself visited Kiev.<sup>62</sup> In September 1996, the U.S. and Ukraine agreed to create a bi-national commission, chaired by then Vice-President Al Gore and President Kuchma. That consisted of four committees dealing with foreign policy, security trade, and investment and economic issues. In October 1996 the two sides described their relations as “a strategic partnership.” Though work continues on silos and delivery systems, the period after June 1996 can be genuinely characterized as a post-nuclear one, in which the shape of relationship will be determined by a broad set of political, economic and security issues—and not nuclear issues.

#### Post-Nuclear Period.

In December 1996 a NATO Ministerial communiqué stating the alliance’s support for Ukrainian political and economic reform and acknowledging that, “the maintenance of Ukraine’s independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty is a crucial factor for stability and security in Europe.” The U.S.-Ukrainian cooperation laid out the basic principles incorporated in the NATO-Ukraine chapter the following year. Ukraine has also joined the Missile Technology Control Regime, which broadly expanded defense and military contacts with the U.S., NATO, and other Westerns countries.

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<sup>62</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, *Ukraine in the World*, “U.S. – Ukrainian Relations: Past, Present, and Future,” Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p.105-114

Ukraine's contribution to U.S. interests is also impressive. Ukraine has a growing technology exchange program with NASA and provided experiments for a Space Shuttle launch in October 1997 that included the first flight of a Ukrainian astronaut on a western space mission. In the nuclear field, Ukraine has cooperated closely with the U.S. and the G-7 to share the results of studies of the Chernobyl disaster and to deal with its aftermath.<sup>63</sup>

With regard to European security, Ukraine has taken an active and eager role in shaping a more integrated, stable, and secure Europe. Ukraine has certainly built an impressive record of cooperation with NATO including the Partnership for Peace. Ukraine also has strengthened the stability in the region by reaching agreements with all its neighbors on the recognition of borders, as well as setting an unprecedented example for the world in eliminating nuclear arms, and other important bilateral issues. An important achievement was the harnessing of inflation—from hyperinflation in 1993—to a rate of 10% in 1997. However, the economy continues to contract and the transition to a market economy is still very much an unfinished process with more hardships ahead.

Ukraine had an opportunity in 1998 to implement needed structural reform that could bring about long-term growth and attract foreign investments. The U.S. contributed to this effort through assistance programs and through actions, such as helping Ukraine toward accession to the World Trade Organization. The International Money Fund (IMF)

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<sup>63</sup> Ukrainian newspaper, *Kievskie Vedomosti*, "Ukraine's Relations with the USA," 5 June 2000

and the World Bank are also vital players in Ukraine's economic restructuring, providing significant loans and funds.

One of the cornerstones for the continuing U.S. partnership with Ukraine is the Open Markets Support Act, enacted in October 1992. Ukraine has been a primary recipient of FSA assistance. Total U.S. assistance since Ukraine's independence has been over \$2 billion. The total U.S. assistance in FY 2000 was \$216 million, of which \$169 million was FSA funding.<sup>64</sup>

The U.S. has also played a leading role in mobilizing support to help Ukraine cover its external financing gaps as it implements hard reform under IMF programs. The U.S. contribution in March 1995 helped support nearly \$5 billion in IMF and other bilateral financing and debt relief. For just the first half of FY 1995, the U.S. coordinated and funded the delivery of \$33 million in food, medical supplies, and clothing to Ukraine as humanitarian assistance.<sup>65</sup>

In addition, Ukrainians have been invited to participate in a broad range of U.S. exchanges and training programs. These include:

- Coal mine safety;
- Nuclear reactor safety;
- Privet land ownership and real estate markets;

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<sup>64</sup> U.S Department of State, *US Aid Assistance to Ukraine*, Available [on line]: [<http://usinfo.state.gov/regionalbuc/usukraine/homepage.htm>], January 2001

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

- Local government finance;
- Telecommunications;
- Banking;
- Tax accounting;
- Labor statistic and labor-management relations;
- Promotion of agricultural development;
- Public health and hospital management and finance;
- Security and defense conversion;
- International military education and training (IMET).<sup>66</sup>

One of the important statements made by President Clinton on meeting with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma on June 5, 2000 in Kiev's summit was that Europe's eastern border does not end at Ukraine's western border. He said, "We feel that it's a fundamental principle of our foreign policy that Ukraine and its integration into European and Euro-Atlantic structures is in our national interest too." There are a number of very important achievements that were signed during this summit:

- First and foremost was the closure of the Chernobyl nuclear plant on December 15, 2000. In connection with this:
- A U.S. pledge of \$78 million for the Chernobyl Shelter Fund, which helped pay for a "sarcophagus" for the Chernobyl reactors;

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<sup>66</sup> U.S. Department of State, *U.S.—Ukrainian Binational Commission: Gore-Kuchma Meeting Strengthens partnerships*, Available [on line]: [<http://usinfo.state.gov/regionalbuc/usukraine/homepage.htm>], January 2001

- A \$2 million Department of Energy nuclear safety program for Ukraine;
- A new program called a “business incubator for the Chernobyl region” to help create new economic opportunities for people in that region.
- The U.S. decision to eliminate commercial space-launch quotas with Ukraine because of Ukraine’s stellar record on nonproliferation, especially in regard to missile technology.
- A special agreement between the U.S. and Ukraine regarding Ukraine’s most painful problem, “corruption.”
- Finally, the “nuclear fuel qualifying agreement,” which will enable Ukraine to diversify its source of nuclear fuel and thereby cut its energy costs.<sup>67</sup>

In short, a bond between Ukraine and the USA is very important for Ukraine, which seeks close relations with the U.S., NATO and other Western’s countries, and also has significant influences on security and stability in Europe.

In his speech in Berlin on May 13, 1998, President Bill Clinton said, “America stands with Europe. Today, no less than 50 years ago, our destinies are joined. If Europe is at peace, America is more secure. If Europe prospers, America does as well. We . . . move to a logic of mutually beneficial interdependence, where each nation can grow stronger and more prosperous because of the success of its neighbors and friends.... We

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<sup>67</sup> Ukrainian daily newspaper *Day*, “President Clinton’s, speech on the meeting with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma on June 5, 2000: Kiev’s summit,” June 6, 2000

seek a transatlantic partnership that is broad and open in scope, where the benefits and burdens are shared, where we seek a stable and peaceful future not only for ourselves, but for all the world.”<sup>68</sup> Therefore, serious political and economic support and assistance, which Ukraine received from the U.S. in that period was a tremendous aid for Ukraine’s rebirth of its own democracy and stability, the base for future relations, and an investment in the stability in the Europe.

## B. RELATIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, a process began of dividing the commonly held assets of the Soviet republics between the newly independent states. The two most important of these new states, Russia and Ukraine, had much to divide between them. Among the most important problems between the two countries were the transfer of Soviet nuclear weapons to Russia, the final legal status of Crimea, and the possession of the Black Sea Fleet (hereafter denoted as "BSF") and its homeport of Sevastopol. Frighteningly, all of these issues had the potential to escalate into a crisis with violent consequences.<sup>69</sup>

The development relationship between Ukraine and Russia had many difficulties, and especially in the first phase, when both Russian bravado, and Ukrainian “suicidal nationalism” influenced the process of negotiations. At the beginning, in May-June

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<sup>68</sup> *Strengthening Transatlantic Security*, “A U.S. Strategy For the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Department of Defense, 2000, p.6

<sup>69</sup> Tyler Felgenhauer, *Ukraine, Russia, and the Black Sea Fleet Accords*, WWS, Case Study 2/99, Princeton University, Available [on line]: [<http://www.wws.Princeton.edu/-cases/papers/Ukraine.html>], December 2000

1990, when Russia declared its sovereignty, the Ukrainian–Russian relations enjoyed a brief and unprecedeted honeymoon. The “Declaration of the Principles of Inter-State Relation between Ukraine and RSFSR Based on the Declaration of State Sovereignty” opened a “new era” in Ukrainian-Russian relations.<sup>70</sup> This document affirmed several important principles:

- The unconditional recognition of Ukraine and Russia as subjects of international law;
- The “sovereign equality” of the two republics;
- The principle of noninterference in each other’s internal affairs and renunciation of force in their dealings;
- The inviolability of existing state borders between the two republics and the renunciation of any and all territorial claims;
- The safe guarding of the political, economic, ethnic, and cultural rights of the representatives of nations of the RSFSR living in Ukraine and vice versa;
- The desirability of mutual beneficial cooperation in various fields on the basis of inter-state treaties and the regulations of disputes in a spirit of harmony.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Roman Solchanyk, *Ukraine, Russia, and the CIS, Before and After Independence*, “Ukraine in the World,” Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p. 24

<sup>71</sup> Text of “Declaration of the Principles of Inter-State Relation between Ukraine and RSFSR Based on the Declaration of State Sovereignty,” See *Literaturna Ukraina*, 6 September 1990

These were the basic principles of the formal treaty between Ukraine and Russia signed on 19 November 1990.

In 1947 Russian philosopher and scientist Georgiy Fedotov wrote, "The awakening of Ukraine, and especially the character of Ukrainians, surprised the Russians intelligentsia, and we were never able to understand it. This was first of all, because we loved Ukraine, we loved her land, her people, her song, and we thought that all this was also part of our national heritage. Also, the separatism was incomprehensible to us because we had never really been interested in the three to four centuries of history that had formed the Ukrainian people and their culture different from the Great Russians." The Ukrainian national problem is for Russia more important than any other national question. This is not a question only about Russia's structure or borders, for we are here talking about her soul."<sup>72</sup>

According to the nationwide poll conducted in Russia in the fall of 1997 by the Center for the Study of Public Opinion, 56 percent of respondents felt that Ukrainians and Russians are "one people." A large segment of the Russian population, and certainly much of political class, the cultural elites, still continue to view Ukraine as an integral part of the Russian nation.<sup>73</sup> In November 1997 President Yeltsin voiced the same point

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<sup>72</sup> Tor Bukkvoll, *Ukrainian and European Security*, "Ukraine and Russia," The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1997, p.61

<sup>73</sup> Roman Solchanyk, *Ukraine in the World*, "Ukraine, Russia, and the CIS. Before and After Independence," Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p.21

in an address to his countrymen, “It is impossible to tear from our hearts that Ukrainians are our own people. That is our destiny—our common destiny.”

All of these statements clearly demonstrate that a significant spectrum of public opinion (including politicians, the elite, and commoners) continue to view the separation of Ukraine as something “artificial and temporary.” Therefore, the Ukrainian-Russians “divorce” was different or more complicated than the other divorces that occurred at the end of 1991. Of course, such opinions seriously influence the behavior of politicians and entice them to attach Ukraine to Russia once again or to any union like the CIS, at all costs. A more serious concern was that Ukraine was necessary for Russia's self-affirmation, and for Russia to become a “Great Empire” again. Such a mentality may have led Russia to attempt to dominate or control the situation from within the former Soviet Union. The first serious conflict between Ukraine and Russia took place after Ukraine's declaration of independence on 24 August 1991. Yeltsin's press secretary, in his speech, neglected the “Declaration of the Principles of Inter-State Relation between Ukraine and RSFSR,” by means of statement that Russia reserved the right to raise the border issue with those republics (except three Baltic states), which declared their independence and discontinued union relations.

“If these Republics enter the Union with Russia,” he explained, ‘it is not a problem. But if they go, we must take care of the population that lives there and not forget that Russians settled these lands.’ Russia will hardly agree to give away these

territories just like that.”<sup>74</sup> This statement had a significant influence on Ukrainian politicians. Ukrainians leaders feared that the Russian government might try to bring Ukraine to its knees. Therefore, Kravchuk maintained in August 1991, that Ukraine could not work on the new Union treaty with Russia until after its referendum on independence. Later, in Belovezha, Kravchuk refused to sign the existing draft of the treaty and to propose his own version of the treaty. An agreement between Russia, Byelorussia, and Ukraine was created as a result.<sup>75</sup> After that, Ukraine and Russia continued to drift apart. According to Foreign Minister Udovenko in his speech to President Kuchma in 1995, “Russia has no intention to build its relation with CIS countries in line with international law, nor to respect the principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs.... In fact, this means undermining that CIS countries will subordinate their activity to Russia’s interests restoring the centralized superpower.”<sup>76</sup>

So quite clearly, from the beginning, Ukraine and Russia had very different views as to the nature and purpose of the CIS. For Ukraine the CIS was a necessary mechanism for an orderly “divorce process,” “a transitional body,” for alienation from Russia. Ukraine refused to take part in any CIS initiatives aimed at greater integration in the political, military, and security spheres. Thus, Ukraine did not sign the collective security

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<sup>74</sup> Russian newspaper, *Rosiiskaya gazeta*, 27 September 1991

<sup>75</sup> Roman Solchanyk, *Ukraine in the World*, “Ukraine, Russia, and the CIS. Before and After Independence,” Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p.26-28

<sup>76</sup> Jamestown Broadcast Monitor, 6 October 1995

treaty in Tashkent in May 1992.<sup>77</sup> Accordingly, to establish security and independence, Ukraine attempts to learn toward the West and NATO in its foreign policy, understanding that NATO would help Ukraine reach its aims.

In November 1990, Ukraine and Russia signed an agreement to respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and on December 8, 1992, Ukraine became a member of the Russian-dominated Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Yet from the start of the decade, Ukraine's relations with Russia were strained due to its concern over Russia's intentions. In January 1993 Ukraine refused to endorse a draft charter strengthening political, economic, and defense ties among CIS members.<sup>78</sup> In many respects, Ukraine's position clearly illustrates the well known "return of geography," since its policies have from the start been dominated by external factors. Since its independence, Kiev has oriented itself toward the West (with the slogan *Nasha Meta: Evropa!*—Our goal: Europe!), trying to forge close ties with Western and Central Europe, as well as with the United States. Reality, however, has also made it necessary for Ukraine to maintain close economic, and hence political, links with its former hegemon.

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<sup>77</sup> Ukraine in the World, "Ukraine, Russia, and the CIS. Before and After Independence," Harvard University Press for the Ukrainian Research Institute, Edited by L.A. Hajda, 1998, p.24

<sup>78</sup> Tyler Felgenhauer, *Ukraine, Russia, and the Black Sea Fleet Accords*, Princeton University, WWS Case Study 2/99, Available [on line]: [<http://www.wws.princeton.edu/-cases/papers/ukraine.html>], December 2000

Ukraine's security predicament results mainly from its precarious geographical situation: it is a peripheral country for the West as well as for Russia.<sup>79</sup>

The harsh economic realities, the dependent Ukrainian economy, from Russia and Russian's source of energy, and the inability or unwillingness of Ukrainian leaders to develop a program of market reforms raise the question of economical relation with Russia. An important factor in this situation was the election of Leonid Kuchma as President of Ukraine. He said, "Anti-Russian actions in politics led to anti-Ukrainian economic consequences."<sup>80</sup>

After the elections, Kuchma did not accomplish the promises that he made during the campaign about developing close relations with Russia, but "suicidal nationalism" and strong abnormal anti-Russian policy, which was very dangerous first of all for Ukrainian integrality, in regards of deep dividing of Ukrainian society, was stopped.

After 1994, Ukraine increasingly moved toward a more balanced foreign policy between West and East. The Trilateral Statement on denuclearization in January 1994, paved the way for more widely developed relations between Ukraine and West, and in the following month Ukraine became the first country from the CIS to sign NATO's Partnership for Peace Program. The BSF negotiations revolved around three primary issues: division of the warships into a truncated Russian BSF and a Ukrainian navy,

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<sup>79</sup> Peter van Ham, *Ukraine, Russia, and European Security: Implications for Western Policy*, Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, Paris—February 1994, Available [on line]: [<http://www.weu.int/instititute/chaillot/chai13e.htm#chap2>], December 2000

<sup>80</sup> Ukrainian daily newspaper, *Uridoviy Kurier*, 16 October 1992

Russian naval basing rights in and around the Crimean port city of Sevastopol, and the larger question of which country had ultimate sovereign control over the peninsula. The ships were never the key issue. While at one time a "jewel of the former Soviet navy," the BSF was by 1995, "both small and old, with the newest of the 635 vessels built 17 years ago." Sherman Garnett points out in his book on Ukraine and its security environment that over the past few decades the BSF:

has been a waning force incapable of performing the role Soviet defense planners assigned it in the Mediterranean against the U.S. 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet and other NATO assets... The real military tasks it must perform in small-scale conflicts and coastal defense do not warrant maintenance of the current Fleet and support facilities.<sup>81</sup>

Ukraine and Russia were claiming sovereign control over Sevastopol and the Crimean peninsula. As one *New York Times* article notes, the BSF problem, "was always more of a political issue than a strategic one. Ukraine and Russia could have gone to war over the fleet—not over the actual strategic value of the ships in harbor, but over Ukraine's desire for complete independence from Russia and for Russia's want to maintain some control in the Soviet successor states."<sup>82</sup>

In the background of all the BSF negotiations was the status of Crimea, a peninsula butting into the Black Sea from Ukraine's south shore. Crimea, an area with a

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<sup>81</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe*, Brookings Institution Press, 1997

<sup>82</sup> Tyler Felgenhauer, *Ukraine, Russia, and the Black Sea Fleet Accords*. Princeton University, WWS Case Study 2/99, Available [on line]: [<http://www.wws.princeton.edu/-cases/papers/ukraine.html>], December 2000

large ethnic Russian population, famous resorts, and a naval base, was handed to Ukraine as a meaningless gesture of friendship in 1954 by the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev to mark the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ukrainian union with Russia.”<sup>83</sup> The home base for BSF’s was the famous port city of Sevastopol. The problem of a new border became salient after the breakup of the Soviet Union, as Russia began regular demands that Crimea be returned to Russia, along with the BSF and its base.<sup>84</sup> Ethnic tensions in 1992 prompted some to advocate for the secession of Crimea from Ukraine and its annexation to Russia. In July 1992, the Crimean and Ukrainian parliaments determined that Crimea would remain under Ukrainian jurisdiction while retaining significant cultural and economic autonomy.”<sup>85</sup>

Yet, the ethnic issue still brewed. Crimea’s first presidential elections in January 1994 resulted in the election of Yuri Meshkov, a member of the Republican Party of Crimea advocating closer ties to Russia. Disputes over the BSF began with both Ukraine and Russia taking extreme positions. At a January 1992 press conference the Ukrainian Ministers of State and Defense Antonov and Morozov declared that the BSF was always and will remain Ukrainian. At a March 1992 CIS summit in Kiev, a contentious bilateral meeting between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Ukrainian President Leonid

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<sup>83</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Background Notes: Ukraine, June 1997*, Available [on line] [[http://www.state.gov/www/background\\_notes/ukraine\\_0697\\_bgn.html](http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/ukraine_0697_bgn.html)], January 2001

<sup>84</sup> Stephen Erlanger, *Red' Fleet in Black Sea Split*, *New York Times*, News Service, (6/11/95), Available [on line]: [<http://www.b-info.com/places/Bulgaria/news/95-06/jun11a.tk>], December 2000

<sup>85</sup> U.S. Department of State. *Background Notes: Ukraine, June 1997*, Available [on line] [[http://www.state.gov/www/background\\_notes/ukraine\\_0697\\_bgn.html](http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/ukraine_0697_bgn.html)], January 2001

Kravchuk brought no progress. In April, tensions rose to a crisis level as Kravchuk unilaterally announced the formation of a Ukrainian navy to be based in Crimea.

Kravchuk and Yeltsin were able to defuse the crisis, however, and put aside a week of brinkmanship. In two phone conversations the two presidents agreed to suspend their countries' respective decrees claiming the force for themselves and formed a commission to resolve the dispute.<sup>86</sup> By the end of the month Russian and Ukrainian negotiators opened two days of talks in Odessa over April 29-30 on how to divide the BSF. The Russian delegation proposed a moratorium on any unilateral action that could aggravate the situation around the BSF, with a joint commission of Russian and Ukrainian representatives established to monitor the moratorium.<sup>87</sup> The Ukrainians agreed. After that, there were several meetings, and several attempts to solve these problems: in Dagomys on June 23; the agreement signed in Yalta on August 3, 1992; the Massandra Agreement on September 3 1993; active negotiations after the summer of 1994 (after the Kuchma elections); the attempt to involve the U.S. as a mediator in February 1995 was refused by Russia; the Sochi Agreement in June when Yeltsin told reporters afterward that the signing "finally put a period on this question once and for all," and Kuchma, said, "Although some detailed issues remain, I consider this question solved in general." Perhaps his most important comment was, " Ukraine and Russia really agreed on a strategic partnership." A meeting in Barvikha on October 24, 1996, characterized

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<sup>86</sup> Newspaper, *Black Sea Fleet Accord*, Chicago Sun-Times, (04/09/92) p.3

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

by Kuchma's comment, "We did not reach any new agreements.... We simply confirmed the past decision that was adopted on a government level."<sup>88</sup>

This period may be characterized by Irina Kobrinskaya. She said the touchy issue of Sevastopol was ignored because, "Neither Yeltsin nor Kuchma can afford to make a final decision. The political situation is not ready." During this period, both sides were seeking to achieve their own aims very slowly, sometimes taking a step back, but this period prepared both sides for the series of conciliatory steps taken by both sides in April of 1997. Ukrainian PM Pavlo Lazarenko and Russian PM Chernomyrdin signed the final BSF accords in Kiev on May 28, 1997. Ukraine agreed to have its navy participate in joint operational-strategic exercises with the Russian BSF, and Yeltsin's government simply ignored yet another appeal from the Duma to demand "special territorial status" for Sevastopol.<sup>89</sup>

After five years of public posturing, stalemates, and stop-and-go diplomatic negotiations, Ukraine and Russia reached an agreement. While it was expected that Russian President Boris Yeltsin would sign the Russian-Ukrainian Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership, few senior Ukrainian officials believed that a separate BSF

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<sup>88</sup> Alessandra Stanley, *Yeltsin and Kuchma Meet, Seek to Ease Tensions between Russia and Ukraine*, *The New York Times*, (10/25/96) Available on line]: [http://www.nd.edu/astrouni/shiwriter/spool96/96110107.htm], November 2000

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

agreement could be reached. It was also surprising that Moscow had accepted conditions similar to those it had rejected in October 1996.<sup>90</sup>

Briefly, the accords outline an agreement whereby:

- 1) The two nations split the BSF 50-50 with Russia to buy back some of the more modern ships with cash;
- 2) Russia would lease the ports in and around Sevastopol for 20 years at \$97.75 million per year. Russia would also credit Ukraine with \$526 million for the use of part of the fleet, as well as \$200 million for the 1992 transfer of Ukraine's nuclear arsenal to Russia. The payments would go toward reducing Ukraine's \$3 billion debt to Russia (most of which was owed to the Russian gas supplier RAO Gazprom); and
- 3) Crimea (and the city of Sevastopol, built 214 years ago to proclaim the Russian Empire's eternal dominion over the seas<sup>3</sup>) became legally and territorially a sovereign part of Ukraine.<sup>91</sup>

These were the most important steps in the Ukrainian-Russian relationship, and today it seems that the BSF issue is settled, at least for the next few decades. Russia and

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<sup>90</sup> James Sherr, *Russia-Ukraine Rapprochement: The Black Sea Accords*, Survival, vol. 39, no. 3. (Autumn 1997), p.33

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., p.40

Ukraine have an opportunity to ease their remaining tension and fully normalize their relations, and when the time comes again to negotiate the future of the BSF, it will hopefully be a more mundane affair.

Today, the real problem facing Ukraine is not ethnic tension between the Russian and Ukrainian population or between Russia and Ukraine. It is the economic problem. Resolving this problem is impossibility for Ukraine without the economic cooperation of Russia, without Russia's energy and market.<sup>92</sup>

The developing economic relations between the two countries from 1994 to the end of 1999 have a mixed impact. On the one hand, increased trade since mid-1995, the emergence of a mixed business community with vested interests not being interrupted by worsened political relations, and Ukraine's new interest in expanding economic cooperation within the CIS are all factors that have had a stabilizing effect on the relationship, (including the Crimean question and the BSF.)

On the other hand, Ukraine is continuing to fear Russia's attempts to undermine its independence, either by trying to coerce Ukraine into economic communities it does not want to join, or by means of "imperial businessmen" buying up Ukrainian enterprises. Ukraine also fears Russia's impatience with what it sees as half-hearted

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<sup>92</sup> Interview of the President of Ukraine L. Kuchma to Special Russian program: *Podrobnosti—Detail*. 19.02.01 (RTR), S. Pashkov, Available [on line]: [<http://www.nns.ru/interv/int3114.html>], February 2001

economic integration. Both these issues contribute to the continued mistrust between the countries.<sup>93</sup>

In short, the relationship between Ukraine and Russia, during its development has traveled a long and winding way, with some success and some failure, but now these two proud and deserving nations are quite close to forming normal relationships, which must exist between neighboring countries with a common historical heritage. Yet, these relations must not cast any negative influences on Ukraine's real pro-Western orientation and movement toward European integration.

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<sup>93</sup>Tor Bukkvoll, *Ukraine and European Security*, The Royal Institute of International Affairs. p.83

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## V. CONCLUSION\*

Ukraine today is confidently striding on the road toward consistent democratic transformation and economic reforms. The nation is solving painful social and security problems while completing its transition to a market economy.

Unfortunately, non-democratic events sometimes still occur in Ukraine, demonstrating that the political society is still weak and many political and economic reforms are still necessary to bolster the inadequacies in these institutions. Nevertheless, Ukraine reaffirmed its historic choices in favor of independence and sovereignty, continuing reforms, building a market economy, strengthening democracy and promoting supremacy of the law. Political pluralism, freedom of speech, movement and enterprise, private ownership in agricultural and industry, the growing number of public unions, encouraging the free activity of political parties, as well as other democratic freedoms, with only minor exceptions, have become the essence of Ukrainian society.

All these factors will enhance its competitiveness and accelerate Ukraine's integration into the European economic and political space with the ultimate goal of acquiring a status of associate EU member and full membership in the European society. The experience Ukraine has gained during nine years of independence has proved that its foreign policy course has adequately promoted and protected the national interests of the state in the international arena. Today its foreign policy has become an important and integral part of the reformation. This policy is one of the instruments for ensuring

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\* In this chapter, which reviews the thesis, I have used materials from the article: "Ukraine: nine years of independence". August 23, 2000. Available [on line]: [<http://www.un.int/Ukraine/pres-rel/2000/pr-r-0823.htm>], December 2000

economic growth and for guaranteeing the welfare of the population, which are the keys to a prosperous future.

Ukraine is confidently strengthening its position in the international arena and the scope of its relations with the world is expanding. Ukraine's voice is finally being heard in international organizations. Ukraine was elected to the UN Security Council for the period 2000-2001 representing the Eastern European countries.

Ukraine's cooperation with NATO has become an important factor for reaching these complex goals and for strengthening its own stability and security, as well as the stability and security of all Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). The partnership with the Alliance is promoting mutual confidence in the region. Active development of good-neighborly relations with the Alliance member states and candidates for NATO membership, along with unprecedented basic bilateral agreements with those countries, made it possible to address the controversial issues inherited from the past and thus to lay a firm foundation for regional stability.

The joint activity of Ukraine and NATO has become a crucial instrument for stabilizing South and Eastern Europe—earlier in Bosnia and Herzegovina and now in Kosovo. In Kosovo a Joint Ukrainian-Polish Battalion peacekeeping union was formed. There are now grounds for believing that soon the unique experience of this peacekeeping unit will be employed for the Ukrainian-Hungarian-Romanian-Slovakian engineer battalion and for the BLACKSEAFOR, which is expected to become an important element in regional security.

This cooperation with NATO facilitates Ukraine's participation in building a new system of European security. This cooperation, particularly Ukrainian units in the multinational peacekeeping contingents IFOR/SFOR/KFOR along with the joint exercises of the Partnership for Peace Program, help to raise combat preparedness of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Significantly, the NATO member countries provide essential financial and logistic assistance to the Ukrainian troops that perform their peacekeeping mission in Kosovo.

Further development and deepening of the strategic partnership with NATO and the United States of America occupies an important place among Ukraine's foreign policy priorities. During the ninth year of Ukraine's independence, the US-Ukrainian relations—marked by high dynamism—generated valuable practical results.

The visit of the President of the United States to Ukraine on July 5, 2000 was a landmark event in the US-Ukrainian relations. That visit testified that the United States supported the program of reforms introduced in Ukraine and confirmed that the strategic partnership is oriented toward broadening bilateral cooperation.

At the same time, relations between Ukraine and Russia entered a new phase and new approaches were needed to address the remaining issues. Having comprehensively analyzed the state of Ukrainian-Russian cooperation, the leaders reaffirmed their desire to establish a level of relations that was defined earlier as a "strategic partnership." They agreed that temporary economic problems should not have a negative impact on that partnership.

At the recent session of the CIS Council held in Moscow on June 20 and 21, 2000, Ukraine presented an initiative to create a free-trade zone. The Council endorsed this initiative. Thus Ukraine's approach toward the CIS has proven to be productive and realistic, for it is not supra-national structures that can create a viable Commonwealth, but instead the ability of leaders to modernize and to adapt to the new environment by creating favorable conditions for trade, and economic and cultural cooperation.

Relationships with Western countries and NATO helped Ukraine obtain all of these encouraging results. The special relationship with NATO and the bilateral relation with the USA are helping to confirm Ukrainian independence and its movement to an authentic democratic society, and also to confirm its own domestic and external abilities to maintain its security. It was vital for Ukraine to finalize this mutually beneficial relationship with NATO and bilateral relations with the USA. Ukrainian politicians well understand that democracy will succeed only if their states belong to a secure European and Western political, economic, and military community. An objective analysis shows that developing such bonds between Ukraine and NATO in the future, such as including Ukraine in the present NATO enlargement proposal could provide:

- **Expansion of the Stability Zone in Europe.** Since the NATO area is now the most stable region in Europe, close relations with NATO could mean enlarging this region of stability.

- **A Smooth Transition for Ukraine to a Democracy.** A union between Ukraine and NATO can only lead to closer relations to the entire region of Western Europe.
- **A Smooth Transition for Ukraine to a Market Economy.** Such relations in the political and economic spheres could allow Ukraine to develop a broader range of economic relations and reduce its need to be so strongly orientated to the CIS, economically or otherwise.

Yet, for a more successful transition, Ukraine still needs to resolve several challenging problems. First of all, it must reshape or create a more active and stronger political society in the country. Secondly, Ukraine must increase the acceptance of Western society and NATO among its population by explaining the policies of these Western institutions and justifying the benefits that Ukraine could obtain from these institutions. Third, Ukraine needs real economic reforms, principally a market economy capable of generating economic growth. One essential element for reaching these goals is establishing balanced economic relations with Russia. The final, and perhaps one of the most complex barriers to Ukraine's transition, is the political and civil corruption that wears away, both internally and externally, the confidence and hope of everyone involved in this situation. Only with the help of Western society, its exemplary judicial system and others governmental and political structures can Ukraine battle this malignancy and create an authentic democratic society.

By continuing to create and implement documents of cooperation with NATO, such as the Ukraine-NATO Chapter of 1997, "The Government Program of Cooperation

between Ukraine and NATO: 2000 to 2004" and similar agreements, Ukraine will promote its independence, strengthen its statehood, improve its living standards, reduce social tension and secure further democratic development, as the deserving Ukrainian people demanded when they declared their independence on August 24, 1991.

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